Abstract

Indian Death Rituals: The Enactment Of Ambivalence.

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This work provides a survey of Indian funeral rites, concentrating on ceremonies performed by rural mainland Hindus, who have been divided into the broad social categories of brahmins, caste Hindus and outcastes/tribes. The primary intention is to identify a core of ritual, which can be used as a baseline against which particular funeral performances can be checked. This work also examines the variation of brahminical ritual over time through a survey of ethnographic material taken from Gazetteers and Government Ethnographic Surveys; the Purāṇas, represented by a version of the Garuḍa Purāṇa and a work known as the Garuḍa Purāṇa Sāroddāra; and Caland's summary of Vedic ritual in Die altindischen Todten- und Bestattungsgebräuche.

In each of these three sections the funeral rituals have been divided into six stages and these stages have been further divided into sub-sections containing specific rituals or groups of rituals. Sections on untimely death and the role of the widow in her husband's funeral are also included.

Particular emphasis is placed throughout the historical survey on the recurrent theme of ambivalence towards death as reflected both in ritual and its interpretation: the relative is loved and honoured but the corpse is frightening and quickly becomes disgusting. The survey examines the relationship between the primary emotional response to death and secondary ideological

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constructs, and it reveals that while ritual reflects the emotional response to death it does not always reflect secondary ideology.

In addition this work includes a summary, in table form, of the variation of funeral ritual according to geographical area for all three social groups; again taken from the ethnographic material of the Gazetteers and Government Surveys.

ABBREVIATIONS.

Āgn.Gr.=Āgniveśya-Gṛhyasūtra

Āśv.Gr.=Āśvalāyana-Gṛhyasūtra

Āśv.Gr.Par.=Āśvalāyana-Gṛhyasūtra-Pariśiṣṭa

A.S.=Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā, Śaunikīya recension

A.V.=Atharvaveda

Bṛ.Up.=Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad

Chān.Up.=Chāndogya-Upaniṣad

D.S.=Dharmasūtra

G.P.=Garuḍa Purāṇic material, i.e. the Garuḍa Purāṇa Venkateswara edition and Naunidhirāma's Garuḍa Purāṇa Sāroddhāra

Jai.Br.=Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa

Jai.Gr.=Jaiminīya-Gṛhyasūtra

Kātyāyana=Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra

Kauś.Up.=Kauśītaki-Upaniṣad

Mait.Saṃ.=Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā

Mārk.P.=Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa

Matsya P.=Matsya Purāṇa

Padma P.=Padma Purāṇa

Pār.Gr.=Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra

Praś.Up.=Praśna-Upaniṣad

Pūrv.K.=Garuḍa Purāṇa Pūrvakhaṇḍa

R.V.=Ṛg Veda

Śāṅkh.Gr.=Śāṅkhāyana-Gṛhyasūtra

Sār.=Garuḍa Purāṇa Sāroddhāra

ABBREVIATIONS (continued)

Śat.Br.= Śatapaṭha-Brāhmaṇa

Śr.K.=Śrāddha-Kalpa

Tait.Samh.=Taittirīya-Saṃhitā

Utt.K.=Garuḍa Purāṇa Uttarakhaṇḍa

Vai.Gr.=Vaikhānasa-Gṛhyasūtra

Vāj.Samh.=Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā

Yaj.=Yajñavalkya

Indian Death Rituals: The Enactment Of Ambivalence.

The aim of this thesis is primarily to provide a work of reference on Indian funeral rites. Secondarily, since every presentation of data necessarily involves selection and explanation, it is also a work of interpretation.

The mass of data on Indian funeral rites is enormous; there are literally hundreds of accounts, both long and short, ancient and modern. Yet most people when dealing with the subject start afresh, or nearly so, and laboriously describe the basics; moreover they are at a loss to distinguish between features integral to all Hindu treatments of death, customs peculiar to the social group they are observing, and the idiosyncrasies of particular performance and ad hoc interpretation. This thesis, therefore, aims to provide a kind of baseline against which particular performances can be checked.

Even to provide this baseline, however, I have not adopted a purely positivist approach. Firstly, and most obviously, I have organized the material into ritual stages. Secondly, I have restricted my account of "Indian" death rites to those of core groups, in terms of time, physical space and social space. These three restrictions mean respectively that, with a few exceptions, I have nothing later than the 1930's, that I have only included things which happen within the subcontinental mainland, and that I have kept out on the one hand modern city-dwellers and on the other hand those Indians who define themselves as other than Hindu. The term "Hindu" is here used to define a residual

category comprising of all Indians who are not adherents of imported monotheism (e.g. Muslims, Christians, Jews) or of specific groups which have come to deny a Hindu identity (e.g. Sikhs, Jains). I have also, with a few exceptions, omitted Hindu sectarians. Thirdly, I have not tried to be exhaustive in the sense of mentioning every detail or of including every account ever published. I have exercised my judgement in selection because, while too skimpy a work would be useless, something clogged with detail becomes unwieldy and indeed unreadable. Furthermore, I am restricted in length by the D.Phil regulations, though in this case that is no disadvantage if it has resulted in a survey of useful and manageable proportions. I have managed to provide a far greater mass of data than there is space to discuss through the device of the tables, and secondarily through my bibliography, though this too makes no claim to be exhaustive.

I am thus aware that every presentation of data necessarily involves selection and interpretation. While I am trying to present a core of Hindu ritual, I am interested in axes/dimensions of variation by time, geographical area, caste and religious affiliation. The tables give some idea, in a fairly synchronic picture, of variation by region and caste. In the text I have concentrated on variation over time going back to the Purāṇas and then to the Vedas. This is not simply, or even primarily a straightforward chronological exercise. Hindus tend to define themselves in terms of a history in which they have adhered to brahminical norms. In fact the Vedas and the use of

Sanskrit were virtually restricted to brahmins until the nineteenth century. However, brahmins officiated for other high castes (defined in their books as <u>kṣatriyas</u> and <u>vaiśyas</u> but really more diverse and complex), and this no doubt explains why in the Gazetteers the authors can draw a line between "high" and "low" castes even though in general terms castes in any given locality rank along a continuum. It could well be that some utterly non-Vedic practices recorded for the low castes and tribes in the ethnography are as ancient as brahminical practices but since next to nothing is known about the lives of non-brahmins in earlier times we can never be sure of this.

Although Hindu funeral rituals vary according to time, geographical area etc., they nevertheless express the recurrent theme of ambivalence. This ambivalence is not unique; it is unlikely that there is any culture in which attitudes to death are not ambivalent, though ideology may provide clearcut answers. The primary ambivalence is emotional and arises from the fact that the corpse both is and is not a beloved relative. The relative is loved, honoured and missed but the corpse is frightening and quickly becomes disgusting. In many cases death is also the cause of guilt among those left behind - the child's irrational response to death. Cultural constructs built on this primary, emotional ambivalence may not be quite so universal and can be termed secondary.

Funeral rituals are bound to reflect the primary ambivalence; whether they also reflect the secondary ideological

constructs is a matter for investigation. Throughout such an investigation it is necessary to keep in mind the distinction between a rite and its interpretation. People may say they believe one thing but act as though they believe something else. What people say may reflect secondary ideological constructs; the rites they perform usually reflect primary emotional responses, which do not always coincide with the secondary ideology. For instance, virtually all Hindus pay some lip service to the ethical law of *karma* but it figures only in the interpretations of what people do and not in determining the acts themselves, which seem to express other things, like a fear of ghosts or the belief that ritual intervention can determine the deceased's fate after death.

Thus, during the course of this survey of funeral rites I hope to reveal both the extent to which any inconsistency between funeral ritual and its interpretation is the result of the superimposition of later ideas and rituals on earlier ceremonies without reinterpretation of or integration with the earlier tradition and the extent to which any inconsistency is the result of tension between secondary ideological constructs and the primary emotional response to death.

Death Rituals In Ethnography.

Man's existence has always been characterized by an awareness of his transience. Death, by its accidental and contingent nature, disrupts both the continuity of human relationships and also the basic assumption of order on which society rests; so, from earliest times, societies have developed rituals to formalize both the act of dying and the disposal of the corpse. Death provokes an ambivalent reaction: the deceased is and is not a beloved relative; the relative is loved and missed but the corpse is frightening and soon becomes disgusting too. In Hindu funerary rites this ambivalence is displayed in rituals where the corpse is treated both as pure and impure and the spirit of the deceased as both a dangerous ghost and a god-like Ancestor. I wish to examine this ambivalence and to do so have divided Hindu funeral and memorial ceremonies into six stages. They are as follows:-

1. Rites for the dying person, the preparation of the corpse and the funeral procession.
2. The disposal of the corpse.
3. Rites concerning the collection of the bones or attention to the grave and associated offerings.
4. Rites for the ghost.
5. The end of mourning.
6. Commemorative rites.

These stages are further divided into sub-sections containing specific rituals or groups of rituals. In addition to

these six stages of funeral ritual I will also include a section on untimely death, in which the fear of the ghost is more marked, and a section on the role of the widow in her husband's funeral and how attitudes towards death affect the way in which she is treated. I omit the practice of satī, however, which is too large a subject to be treated adequately within the scope of the present work[1].

I examine funeral rituals first as recorded in ethnography, for which most of my material comes from Gazetteers and Government Ethnographic Surveys, the rest from a few more recent anthropological monographs. The Gazetteers were produced by the British Government, mainly during the late 1800's, and provide information about the geography and peoples of the various Indian districts under British control. Their purpose was to give new revenue officers and administrative staff the fullest possible information about the areas under their jurisdiction. Local Collectors and their assistants spent a large part of the year moving around their district of administration in constant contact with all classes of the Indian population and they provided much of the information that went into the Gazetteers. The Government Ethnographic Surveys were commissioned by the British Government in 1901 and a Superintendent of Ethnography was appointed for each Presidency or Province to collect information about the social groups of that area. These were

[1] A short list of works and articles on satī is included at the end of the bibliography.

again intended to provide the administration with information about the customs and beliefs of the people under its jurisdiction.

I have sought to reduce the effect of any errors in these accounts by looking at a large amount of material and dealing only with features which make a consistent appearance. The main features of the funeral rites of each of the accounts examined can be found in the tables at the rear. From these accounts I have derived the three categories under which I have grouped the communities described in this material: brahmins, caste Hindus and outcastes/tribes. I will refer to these three categories as groups in order to distinguish them from the different communities within them. I follow the ethnographic source material when describing certain communities as outcastes/tribes but acknowledge that the category is problematic because the difference between lowcaste Hindus on the one hand and outcastes/tribes on the other is not at all clear.

I then examine funeral ritual in Garuḍa Purāṇic material, represented by the Venkateswara version of the Garuḍa Purāṇa and Naunidhirāma's Sāroddhāra. Finally, I examine Vedic funeral ritual as found in Vedic sūtras; this material I have taken primarily from Caland's Die altindischen Todten- und Bestattungsgebräuche. More detailed descriptions of the material used for the examination of Garuḍa Purāṇic and Vedic ritual can be found in the introductions to these sections.

The material includes three levels of interpretation: that of the participants or of the text; that of the ethnographer or textual critic; and my own. These different levels are distinguished by dividing each sub-section into two halves: the first half of each section contains interpretations provided by the participants or by the texts; the second half of each section contains my own interpretations and those given by ethnographers or textual critics.

Stage 1. Rites For The Dying Person, Preparation Of The Corpse And The Funeral Procession.

1a.Removal Of The Dying Person Or The Newly Dead Corpse From The Bed.

A feature common to the funerals of brahmins, caste Hindus (including Liṅgāyats) and tribal groups alike, is the removal of the dying person or the newly dead corpse from their bed on to the floor. Among Hindus and some tribes the dying person is laid on the floor with his head in the north and his feet to the south and in many castes and tribes the dying person or newly dead corpse is laid on ground which has been newly spread with ritually pure substances such as cow dung, darbha grass and quartz dust. The Maria Gonds (tribal)[2] of the Central Provinces say that they lay the dying person on the ground simply because they do not want the dying person to fall off the cot in his last convulsion. According to the Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[3] in

[2] Grigson p.271

[3] Dubois p.483

Dubois' account, if a man dies in bed he will have to carry it with him to the next world. The brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār[4], however, provide an explanation for the rite which gives some significance to the practice of plastering the floor with ritually pure substances: that the bed occupies the intermediate space between the earth and sky which is occupied by demons. If a man dies in his bed, they say, then he returns as an evil spirit.

Several communities of brahmins, caste Hindus and tribes from the north of India take the person outside the house to die. The Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus)[5] of Nepal, hope to get the person to their local holy river, which is believed (as all over India) to be the equivalent of the Ganges. The Śaivite Mālas (outcastes)[6] of the South take the dying person outside the house because they believe that if a person dies in the house then the house becomes so polluted it is unfit for habitation. The Vaiṣṇavite Mālas, however, allow a person to die in the house.

In the explanation given by the Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins for the practice of placing the dying person on the ground he is viewed as particularly vulnerable to demons and it is interesting to note that in several of the ethnographic accounts the floor is strewn with sesame seeds, which are often used in Hindu ritual to drive demons away. The use of purificatory substances suggests

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[4] Stevenson p.142

[5] Toffin p.244

[6] Thurston v.IV p.371

that the dying person or newly dead corpse is also placed on the prepared area to be purified, although this explanation is nowhere recorded. If this is the case then the rite attempts to remove the two main impediments to correct performance of the funeral rites: possession, which means that the deceased becomes a demon, immune to the family's attempts to turn him into an Ancestor, and pollution, which makes the corpse unfit to be placed on the fire of a funeral pyre as the 'last sacrifice'. Another type of purification ceremony can be seen in the Śreṣṭha caste: the person dies with his feet in a substitute for the Ganges, the river which can remove the pollution of all sins.

It is interesting that some Liṅgāyats place the dying person on ground smeared with cow dung or quartz ashes, since it is one of the tenets of the Liṅgāyat faith that there is no death pollution; death is a festive occasion because the Liṅgāyat goes at death to a blissful life in Śiva's abode Kailāsa. Possibly in the case of the Liṅgāyats the prepared ground is intended merely to provide a consecrated place fit for the holiness of the mortal remains of a dweller in Kailāsa; however, as will be seen later in the funeral rites, Liṅgāyats seem to deny death pollution not because they believe that they are inherently pure but because they believe they can remove impurity immediately through the ritual intervention of their guru. Thus, it is possible that the dying person is laid on the consecrated ground to protect the corpse from pollution until the guru arrives.

The dying person or corpse is not only protected from demons and impurity but is also a polluting object in itself. It is interesting to note that not one of the groups that take the person out to die is said to practise rituals which purify the house. This would suggest that it is the corpse itself which acts as the source of impurity in the house rather than death in general. The fear of pollution may not be the only reason for removing the dying person outside. Crooke[7] suggests that the Majhwārs (tribal) of the North take the person outside the house to facilitate the departure of the spirit. Although none of the groups give this as an explanation for the practice, this idea may well be implicit. Certainly the Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus) of Nepal worry about the free exit of the spirit and give this as the reason for some of their other rites, such as exchanging a person's woollen clothes for cotton ones and undoing the ties on garments.

Although the accounts offer no explanation for the orientation of the dying person it seems likely that it indicates his ambiguous ritual status as an auspicious/inauspicious being; his head is placed in the north, traditionally the auspicious ritual region of men but he looks towards the south, traditionally the inauspicious region of death and the Ancestors. The orientation also demonstrates his transitional status as someone about to leave the world of men and pass through death into the world of the Ancestors.

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[7] Crooke v.I p.433

1b. Putting Substances Into The Mouth Of The Dying Man Or Corpse.

This rite is practised by all sections, normally just before or soon after death. The commonest substances placed in the mouth are holy water (from a sacred river or made holy by a priest dipping his toe in it), tulasī (holy basil), pañcagavya (the five products of the cow) and pieces of precious metal, particularly gold. Amongst the brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār[8], it is so essential to have gold in the mouth at the time of death that people often have it inserted in their teeth during their lifetime, in order to ensure it is already there when they die. According to the Komatis (caste Hindus) of Mysore[9], pañcagavya which has been correctly prepared and administered purifies the body and cleanses it of the effects of all previous sins.

Tribal groups also place substances into the mouth of the corpse or dying person, the most common being silver or (if they can afford them) gold coins. The coins are frequently administered to the dying person rather than the corpse and several accounts mention that usually no one recovers after the last rites have been performed because most people die from choking on the coin. The Gond and Bhumia tribes[10] of the Central Provinces try to make the dying person swallow a coin so that he will have money in the next world. According to the Badagas

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[8] Stevenson p.143

[9] Nanjundaya & Iyer vol. III p.571

[10] Fuchs p.327

(tribal)[11] of the South, the gold coin, which they dip in ghee, is the fee to the guardian of the bridge spanning the river of death, while the ghee sustains his strength on the journey. The Majhwārs (tribal)[12] of the Central Provinces give cooked rice and curds so that the dying person may not go hungry to the next world. As the Pardhans[13], also of the Central Provinces, say,"As we don't go unprepared on a Mangteri tour, so a dying man does not like to go without something for his journey." The practice of giving money for the journey is not confined to tribal groups, it is merely that this idea is not uppermost when Hindus place precious metals in the corpse's mouth. The Nambūtiri brahmins[14] of the South, however, deny that the idea is there even implicitly, saying that the placing of gold on the body has nothing to do with assisting the deceased on his journey to the "undiscovered country." Hindus other than brahmins frequently tie some coins and rice in the corpse's shroud and then leave them at the halt on the way to the cremation ground and it is these, rather than the precious metals in the mouth, that are interpreted as provisions for the way.

Many Liṅgāyats put water in which the guru's feet have been washed into the mouth of the dying person or corpse. The Jains, like other caste Hindus, put substances into the mouth of the

[11] Thurston v.I p.110-11

[12] Crooke v.III p.153

[13] Hivale p.175

[14] Thurston v.V p.214-15

dying person or corpse. In most cases they follow the Hindu ritual but there are instances where they do not. The Jains[15] of Mysore place in the corpse's mouth a two anna piece, rather than a piece of gold, and it is later given to the sweepers at the cremation ground for rent; the Jains of Kānara[16] put water sweetened with sugar, rather than holy water, into the dying person's mouth.

All the substances used by the Hindus are believed to have purificatory properties and this ritual reinforces that of putting the dying person or corpse on to a ritually pure area. The mouth is an opening by which impurity may enter or leave by blocking this with a purifying substance, not only are internal impurities cleansed but the body is also protected from external contaminating forces. The Liṅgāyat ritual is identical in form to the Hindu rite, which would suggest that it too is a purificatory rite preparing the dying man for entry into Kailāsa. In the tribes, the main reason for the ritual appears to be rather different from that of the Hindus. The emphasis is not on the purificatory nature of the metal placed in the mouth but on the monetary value of the coin.

The ritual practised by the Jains of Mysore suggests that, as among the tribes, the monetary value of the coin is more important than its purificatory properties and that it is first

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[15] Nanjundaya & Iyer v.III p.460

[16] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XV pt.I p.235

money for the way and later does service as rent for the cremation ground. The Jains of Kānara use a substance which has no purificatory significance for the Hindus, but sugared water placed in the mouth of the dying person by the Muslims of Kānara. Thus it would seem that in this rite the Jains ally themselves with the Muslims, perhaps wishing to differentiate themselves from the Hindus.

1c. Last Gifts And Words.

All Hindu groups recite divine names to the dying person, the most popular being Rāma, Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa. According to the brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār[17], the man dying with the sacred syllable Ŏm on his lips, which represents Brahmā with 'A', Viṣṇu with 'U' and Śiva with 'M', goes straight to mokṣa (release from rebirth) without any delay. Among the Komatis (caste Hindus)[18] of Mysore, the name Nārāyaṇa is so associated with death that it is not pronounced on ordinary occasions. The family hold a solemn consultation before deciding that the moment has arrived for the dying man to say 'that word'. Like some other higher castes, they hope that the dying person can be made to pronounce the word, so the relatives shout it into his ears, attempting to elicit some sort of response. The noise accompanying a Hindu's last moments is a feature noted in several ethnographic accounts. Amongst the Komtis of Sholāpur[19], for instance, the family priest reads

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[17] Stevenson p.138

[18] Nanjundaya & Iyer v.III p.570 fn.

[19] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XX p.72

sacred scriptures in a raised voice, trying to make the dying person hear. Amongst the brahmins, the so-called karṇa mantras (ear mantras) which consist of verses from the Ṛg Veda or the Upaniṣads, are chanted into the dying man's ear.

In addition to the recitation of sacred names and texts, alms are given on behalf of the dying person. Lower caste Hindus and some tribes give money and food to beggars. Liṅgāyats give alms of money, cloth and vibhūti (sacred ashes) to jangams (Liṅgāyat priests). The higher caste Hindus, who have brahmins as their priests, offer certain specific items to a brahmin, the most important of which is a cow. The higher caste Hindus may also practise the more general almsgiving as well. The dying Meshri Vāniā (caste Hindu)[20], for instance, gives a brahmin a cow, or a cow's worth, but is also made to pour some water onto the ground saying,"So much (naming a sum) will be given in charity after my death." The specific items given to brahmins divide into three main categories: the cow gift, money gifts and gifts of iron objects ranging from cooking vessels to rusty nails and shovels. The iron, according to the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[21], is believed to keep off all attacks of Yama, the god of death, and to ward off evil spirits.

The cow gift is more than a particularly lavish type of almsgiving: it is thought to help the spirit of the deceased on its journey after death. It is universally believed amongst those

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[20] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XI pt.I p.94

[21] Stevenson p.140

castes who practise the gift of the cow or its monetary equivalent, that it enables the spirit of the deceased to cross the river Vaitaraṇī, horrible with blood, filth and monsters, which straddles the way of Yama. In the case of the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[22] and the Kurmis (caste Hindus)[23] of the Central Provinces, it enables the deceased to cross in a very direct way; if the deceased has given the cow gift, when he reaches the river he will be towed across holding onto a cow's tail. Many castes do not give the cow before death but include it amongst the later gift of the necessities of life (Eth 1f). Some communities give it twice, once before death and a second time with the other gifts towards the end of mourning. This type of repetition is seen throughout the funeral ceremonies, the attitude being that if a ritual is efficacious then there is no harm and possibly some extra benefit to be gained from performing it several times. Indeed, according to the Kurmis, who call it bachra sānkal (the chain calf) because it furnishes a chain across the river, the gift may be given three times, once before and twice after death. The Pātāne Prabhus (caste Hindus)[24] of Poona and the Komtis (caste Hindus)[25] of Sholāpur combine the practice of the gift of the cow with that of putting substances in the dying person's mouth; before the cow

[22] Stevenson p.141

[23] Russell v.IV p.74

[24] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.228

[25] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XX p.72

is given to a brahmin, the dying person is made to drink water in which the cow's tail has been dipped.

Stevenson[26] mentions that the male Kāṭhiāwār brahmins have the option of becoming a death-bed samnyāsī (ascetic). The dying person's head is shaved, he puts on the saffron coloured robes and goes through all the ceremonies of initiation; because he has to respond, it all has to be completed before he loses consciousness. Such a death-bed ascetic is known as an ātura saṃnyāsī (sick-bed ascetic). It is believed that the death-bed initiate is assured of release and therefore his relatives do not have to go to the trouble or the expense of performing any rituals to process the ghost.

The rites before death are not only concerned with making the corpse fit for processing but also with putting the spirit into a fit state to leave the body. When the relatives read holy texts to the dying man, make him recite divine names and give alms on his behalf it would seem that they are attempting to improve his karmic standing so that when he dies his spirit leaves the body through the brahmarandhra (the fontanelle), the path taken by the good, rather than through the anus, the gateway by which a departing spirit enters into the terrible tortures of the damned. It is noteworthy that the Liṅgāyats, who believe that the dying person has an assured future in heaven, should give alms like other Hindus when there should be no need to boost the

[26] p.139

merit of the deceased. When a Liṅgāyat of Bijāpur[27] is dying he gives alms to the mathadayya (the head of the monastery) with the words,"I go to become one with your lotus-like feet," and the certainty of heaven expressed in these words suggests that the dying man's gifts are primarily a mark of respect to the priest rather than an attempt to improve his karmic standing before he dies. This respect for the guru, as will be seen later (Eth.1d), is based on the fact that the Liṅgāyat's purity and assured place in heaven are the result of the guru's ritual intervention in his life.

The explanations given for the gift of the cow suggest that the specific gifts given to the brahmin have a different significance from those given in general almsgiving ceremonies. Participants believe that if they give the cow to a brahmin the spirit of the deceased will somehow receive it, and it seems probable, though it is not explicitly stated, that they believe the deceased will also receive the money gifts. This idea will be seen again in the ceremonies towards the end of mourning, in which items like shoes and umbrellas are given to a brahmin for the use of the dead man. According to Iyer and Nanjundaya[28], the receipt of a cow is considered to be a very base act requiring a purification ceremony though they do not explain why. It would seem, however, that in receiving the cow, the brahmin becomes a representative of the dying person and takes on that person's

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[27] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XXIII p.236-7

[28] v.III p.570 fn.

death impurity and inauspiciousness. As a representative of the dying man he is vulnerable to demon attack and he is also in danger of being collected by the servants of Yama when they come to take their victim away. This would explain why the gifts are accompanied by iron objects to protect the recipient from the attacks of Yama and of evil spirits.

The ritual performed by the Pātāne Prabhus and the Komtis can be interpreted as a repetition of the gift of a cow using two different media, a type of repetition which will be seen again in the ghost feeding ceremonies: they put the essence of the Vaitaraṇī cow into the dying person's mouth whilst giving the cow to a representative of the deceased.

1d. Preparation Of The Corpse.

Among those communities who wear the sacred thread, the chief mourner changes his sacred thread to the inauspicious direction immediately after death. In most Hindu communities no cooking is allowed to take place in a house where a corpse is present. Usually the body is washed, though many tribes do not prepare the corpse at all but take it straight to the funeral ground. The washing of the corpse is not simply for cosmetic purposes; it is intended to ensure its ritual purity. Among the brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār[29] the corpse must be washed with holy water ie. running water, not water stored in the house in jars. The water is usually heated to remove any impurities and the Warlis

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[29] Stevenson p.114

(tribal)[30] of the Bombay area will not allow any addition of cold water to adjust the temperature because they believe this makes the water impure again. Among the Vaiṣṇava brahmins[31] of the South, the corpse has to be washed twice, once immediately after death and a second time after it has been shaved by a barber. The touch of the barber is believed to be polluting because of his association with death; thus it is somewhat ironical that he even pollutes the corpse on which he exercises his functions. The corpse has to be washed a second time to bring it back to its state of ritual purity. Shaving the corpse or the dying man is a practice which appears in several accounts of brahminic funeral rites. According to the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[32], shaving off all the hair except the sacred lock (śikhā) guards the dying man still further against becoming a ghost. Once the corpse has been cleansed, it is carefully guarded against pollution from the touch of an animal, an untouchable or a person of lower caste than the deceased.

After the corpse has been washed it is dressed. The practice of tying a corpse's thumbs and toes is also common amongst the three Hindu groups. The toes and thumbs usually remain bound during the funeral procession but are undone at the funeral ground. The clothes and cloths in which the corpse is dressed should be ritually pure; ideally they should be new, but failing

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[30] Save p.127-8

[31] Dubois p.484

[32] Stevenson p.142

that, freshly laundered. In some Hindu communities a piece of cloth, known as the śeṣa (remainder), is torn from the corpse's clothing and worn by the chief mourner. The chief mourner usually removes it after the cremation, though it may be retained until the end of primary pollution.

The need to provide large amounts of funerary cloth places a great financial burden on poorer families and Thurston[33] describes how the Vannāns (washermen) supplement their meagre income by hiring their customers' laundry out to funeral parties. He records the story of a party of Europeans out shooting who met a procession on its way to the funeral ground. The bier was draped with many folds of clean cloth, which one of the party recognised by the initials as one of his bed-sheets. Another identified as his the cloth on which the corpse was lying. He cut off the corner with the initials and in a few days the sheet was returned by the washerman, who pretended ignorance of the mutilation.

All four groups dress the body of a woman who has died before her husband differently from that of a widow. The difference may not be great - sometimes it is only that the married woman has a red auspicious mark on her forehead while the widow does not - but amongst the caste Hindus and brahmins the widow tends to be given a plain winding sheet like a man, while the married woman is decked out as if she were a bride, smeared with turmeric powder and vermilion and covered with flowers.

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[33] Thurston v.VII p.316-17

According to Bayly[34], the high cost of decking the corpse of a married woman in red embroidered Banarsi silk, as was formerly the practice in North India, has meant that in recent years fewer women are now dressed in this way at death. While the faces of widows and men are usually covered, the married woman's is left uncovered, even if she went veiled during her lifetime. In the Bombay area, she is very often dressed in a green robe and bodice and her lap filled with fruit coconuts and flowers. The corpse of a woman dying before her husband is considered especially auspicious amongst the Pātāne Prabhus[35], where each married woman takes a little red powder from the corpse's brow and rubs it on her own brow, praying that she too may die before her husband dies. It is interesting that this preferential treatment of a once-married woman who dies before her husband is practised even by those who allow widow remarriage. According to the Warlis (tribal)[36] of the Bombay area, the married woman is treated in this way because she died suvāsinī (a term of respectful courtesy for a respectable woman whose husband is alive).

Amongst the caste Hindus, the surviving spouse often exchanges betel-nuts with the corpse. The Velālis (caste Hindus)[37] of Poona say that after this the survivor may marry again without angering the dead, though they refer only to a

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[34] p.183

[35] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII p.229

[36] Save p.128

[37] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.260

widower, as they do not allow widow remarriage. Other castes who practise this ceremony, however, allow both widower and widow to remarry after the surviving spouse has shown this ritual respect for his or her link with the dead person. The Kunbis (caste Hindus)[38] of Sātāra practise a variation of this rite. If a woman dies before her husband then some turmeric is taken from her corpse and rubbed on her husband and on her way to the burning ground she is asked to look back and allow her husband to marry again.

Some of the Southern low caste Hindus display the corpse in a pavilion structure which resembles that used in South Indian marriage ceremonies. The pavilion used in the marriage ceremony is known as a <u>pandal</u> and acts as a sacred area in which the couple sit. It would appear that the pavilion used in the funeral ceremony provides the same function, providing a holy area in which to display the pure corpse.

Stevenson[39] states that while the body is in the house of the brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār, it is looked on as a god, Lakṣmī if it is a woman's, Viṣṇu if a man's, so it is circumambulated in the auspicious direction. The corpse, whether male or female, is usually offered flowers, coconuts, rice, red powder, betel-nuts and leaves, and given a lamp. The lamp is associated with the idea of lighting the deceased's spirit on its journey and the rice is thought of as viaticum. The coconuts offered to the

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[38] <u>Gaz.Bom.Pres.</u> v.XIX p.74

[39] Stevenson p.145

corpse are broken in half by some castes at the moment of death.

Before the funeral procession can take place, brahmin communities usually have to consecrate a new ritual fire. In theory, the consecrated domestic fire (aupāsana), once established, should be kept alight throughout a brahmin's lifetime, but in practice many brahmins, after letting the fire go out on the fourth day after the thread ceremony, rekindle it on their marriage day, on the day of the puberty ceremony, at the birth of a child, at the naming of a child and at death. The consecration of the fire is often accompanied by a homa ceremony in which the chief mourner offers homa (ghee) into the fire, praying to Yama and the deities along the way to the deceased's destination. The Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[40] attach the corpse to the freshly consecrated sacred fire by means of a thread while they make these homa offerings.

Death in a Liṅgāyat household is accompanied by a feast for jangams and laymen. This feast is often started while the person is still dying and it is not held to be important at what stage he dies during the proceedings. During the feast the guru and jangams are given dakṣiṇā (money for ritual services rendered) and pānsupāri (betel leaves and nuts) from the corpse's hand.

In a Liṅgāyat funeral the body is bathed and dressed, and before rigor mortis sets in it is arranged in a sitting posture, in which it is displayed, usually made secure with strings fastened round the body and attached to a peg in the wall. During

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[40] Aiyangar v.4 p.14

the preparation of the corpse, the officiating priest removes the silver <u>liṅgam</u> from the neck of the corpse, ties it to the right arm and then places his foot on either the head or the thighs of the dead body. Amongst the Canarese Banajagas[41] of Mysore, once the officiating priest has placed his foot on the corpse's thighs, other Liṅgāyat priests in the area flock to the house and place their feet on the chest of the corpse, a service for which they are paid. The differential treatment accorded to the corpses of married women and widows is not found amongst true Liṅgāyats. It is found, however, amongst affiliated Liṅgāyats, those whose sons are not allowed to become <u>jangams</u>, but who nevertheless use <u>jangams</u> and follow Liṅgāyat ritual.

Although the communities offer no explanation for the practice of not allowing cooking in the house while a corpse is present, it seems likely that food is not prepared under these circumstances lest it should become contaminated by death pollution associated with the corpse. The ambiguity of the corpse's status as both pure and impure can thus be seen in the way that it is washed and protected from contact with animals but at the same time prevents cooking taking place in the house. Its ambiguous status as both auspicious and inauspicious can also be seen in the way it is treated as a god/goddess in the house and circumambulated in the auspicious direction while the mourners at

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[41] Nanjundaya & Iyer v.IV p.117

the same time are wearing their threads in the inauspicious direction.

Shaving and haircutting are both purificatory rituals in Hindu culture; the saṁskāra of the ceremonial haircutting for instance is supposed to free a child from the impurities contracted in the womb while individuals preparing themselves for certain religious rituals not only observe temporary ascetic practices, such as sleeping on the floor (Eth.3a), but also shave themselves as part of the purificatory procedure. It seems likely therefore that the primary reason for shaving the corpse or dying man is purificatory, preparing him for sacrifice on the pyre. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins, however, seem to see the rite of shaving the dying man as an exorcistic rather than a purificatory rite. Purificatory and exorcistic rites are closely linked, however, in that a person becomes a permanent ghost if he is unfit to be a sacrifice on the funeral pyre, either through having been attacked or possessed by the ghosts and demons which attend any death or through contamination by his own past sins (G.P.1a).

Since the corpse's thumbs and toes are tied for the duration of the funeral procession, it seems that this rite is an attempt to immobilize the ghost through immobilizing the corpse and preventing the spirit of the deceased from walking back to the house. The deceased is not only pure and impure, auspicious and inauspicious but also both ghost and the victim of ghosts. Several rituals in the funeral procession (Eth.1d) are thought to protect the deceased from evil spirits and ghosts along the way

but at the same time the deceased is also a dangerous ghost himself and the relatives, through various means (Eth.1d) also seek to protect themselves from being troubled by him.

Among the caste Hindus and brahmins the cremation is believed to be the antyeṣṭi (the last sacrifice). The antyeṣṭi is, in theory, a self-sacrifice in which the chief mourner acts as a proxy officiant for the deceased. The period of closest identification between the chief mourner and the deceased, therefore, is during the preparation of the corpse, the funeral procession and the cremation itself. During this period the chief mourner does not merely act on behalf of the dead person but takes on the ritual identity of the deceased in order that the cremation may be a true self-sacrifice. This identification of the chief mourner with the deceased is demonstrated in the practice whereby the chief mourner wears part of the corpse's clothing. This close identification is also seen when the Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins attach the corpse to the freshly consecrated fire. They not only establish that the corpse is now a sacrifice to the fire but also that the homa is being offered on behalf of the deceased, that the chief mourner is only acting as his proxy and that the benefit of the sacrifice should accrue to the dead person. Although the period of closest identification with the deceased is during the period up to and including the cremation, the chief mourner continues to be closely identified with the deceased during the period of primary pollution, feeding the dead person and providing him with the raw material for a new

body (Eth.4). Thus, while in some communities the <u>śeṣa</u> cloth is discarded immediately after the cremation, in others it is retained until the chief mourner's task is at an end and he has transferred the deceased to the status of Ancestor.

In the Bombay area a lap-filling ceremony is held in the seventh month of a woman's pregnancy, when she is dressed in a green robe and bodice and women guests lay rice, betel-nuts and betel leaves in her lap. The woman dying before her husband is thus decked out in a way which recalls the two most auspicious events of her life, her marriage and the bearing of children. Dying before her husband is a woman's ultimate seal of respectability; there is no longer any need to veil her face to preserve her good name as there was during her lifetime, instead she is exhibited as an example to all other women. A woman is so closely linked to her husband's identity that if he dies before her she becomes a non-person; as the proverb says, "Your home is only where your husband is" (<u>pati ho to ghar ho, pati nahin to ghar nahin</u>). In a sense, the funeral ceremonies for a man who leaves a wife cannot be properly completed: his spirit cannot truly be said to have been processed while part of it remains behind in the form of his wife. Therefore it is auspicious if she dies before him. Although a widower, unlike a widow, can live as a social and ritual unit without his spouse, it appears that her spirit cannot be fully processed while he remains alive and measures have to be taken to prevent her spirit troubling the husband's new wife should he choose to remarry.

Although those who use a funeral pavilion usually call it by some other name to distinguish it from the marriage booth, the similarity of the two structures means that the funeral pavilion inevitably recalls the auspicious occasion of marriage. The corpse is not only pure, it is also auspicious, and just as marriage leads to birth so death leads to rebirth.

When the lamp is offered to the corpse to light the way in the world beyond and food is offered as viaticum, the body is being used as a way of contacting the spirit of the deceased; the dead person's ghost is believed somehow to receive objects offered to the body. Flowers, coconuts, lamps etc. are also offerings commonly made during worship of the gods so the offerings not only feed the deceased and light the ghost's way but also demonstrate his or her auspicious nature as a god or goddess in the house. As the coconut is often thought of as a substitute for the skull, it seems likely that the cracking of a coconut at the moment of death is not only an offering but also another method by which relatives hope to encourage the spirit to leave by the brahmarandhra.

The Liṅgāyats retain those features of the normal Hindu funeral which are associated with ensuring and maintaining the auspiciousness of the corpse but omit those which acknowledge its serious impurity and inauspiciousness. The most striking difference between the Liṅgāyat and the Hindu preparation of the corpse is the feast which the Liṅgāyats hold for jangams and laymen. If, as seems likely, the Hindus do not cook while the

corpse is in the house for fear of pollution, the feast held at a Lingayat death is not only a ritual assertion of the auspiciousness of the occasion but also of the lack of death pollution. The gifts of daksiṇās and pānsupāri are associated with the Liṅgāyat wedding ceremony, therefore, the auspicious nature of death for the Liṅgāyats is underlined by the fact that the guru and jangams are given dakṣiṇā (money for ritual services rendered) and pānsupāri (betel leaves and nuts) from the corpse's hand, recalling the distribution of dakṣiṇā and pānsupāri at the deceased's wedding. In the Liṅgāyat funeral, the ethnographies variously describe the placing of the jangam's foot on the corpse as a last blessing or rite of purification, the elevated status of the guru being such that these two descriptions appear to be interchangeable. Again, the Liṅgāyats practise a rite which suggests that the lack of death pollution is not inherent but only achieved through the intervention of the Liṅgāyat priest. Among the Canarese Banajagas, the relatives of the dead man, in their anxiety to do the best possible for the dead person, tend to duplicate the rites paying for as many repetitions of the foot placing ceremony as they can afford, a feature seen in other areas of funeral ritual. The differential treatment accorded to the corpses of married women and widows in other Hindu communities is not found amongst true Liṅgāyats which is consistent for a sect which, in theory, does not believe in death pollution and allows the remarriage of widows.

1e. The Funeral Procession.

In all four groups it is usual for the chief mourner to lead the funeral procession carrying a fire pot. In the case of brahmins this should be the aupāsana or consecrated domestic fire. The chief mourner is normally immediately followed by the corpse's bier. Amongst the Hindus, great care is taken that nothing should come between the chief mourner and the deceased. Amongst the Nayars (caste Hindus) of Cochin[42], the chief mourner not only wears a piece of cloth taken from the corpse (Eth.1c) but also a piece of iron, generally a long key. It is interesting to note that many Hindus who practise burial nevertheless head their funeral processions with the chief mourner carrying a fire pot, which adds strength to the argument that burial is often a substitute for cremation (see 1f.). In outcaste communities in the South, the chief mourner's place at the head of the funeral procession may be taken by the barber.

The male mourners follow behind the bier and make up the rest of the funeral procession. Only low caste, outcaste and tribal women follow the bier to the funeral ground; high caste women turn back from the procession as it leaves the village, taking their funeral bath at the time they estimate cremation is taking place.

Amongst the brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār[43], the bier bearers must be of the same caste as the deceased and they must wear

[42] Iyer v.II p.92

[43] Stevenson p.I48

ceremonially pure clothing. They also strew the way to the cremation ground with Ganges water, saying that this purifies the ground over which the bier must be carried from the touch of the low caste feet which have travelled on it. The same idea is probably behind the practice in the South of putting newly washed cloths on the ground on which the bier carriers walk.

Puffed rice, betel leaves and other foodstuffs are often strewn along the way by the mourners. The accounts of the Kunbis (caste Hindus)[44] of the Central Provinces and the Okkiliyans (caste Hindus)[45] of the South state that the food and coins scattered on the way are picked up by the poor and the untouchables. The Pātāne Prabhus (caste Hindus)[46] of Poona believe it pleases the evil spirits which infest the way. Southern brahmins offer rice which they call pathi bali (way offering) at halts along the way, not as food for the deceased but for bhūtas (ghosts, demons). A similar idea is behind the offerings known as pathika (traveller) made by the brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār[47]. They offer piṇḍas to specific spirits: the spirit of the plot of earth on which the corpse lies, the spirit of the house doorway, the spirit of the crossroads and the spirit of the place where the corpse is rested. These spirits are not necessarily evil but could nevertheless hinder the free passage

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[44] Russell v.II p.35

[45] Thurston v.V p.442

[46] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII p.229

[47] Stevenson p.146

of the corpse to the cremation ground and therefore must be appeased. Among the tribes, the explanation for the practice of throwing food along the way changes. The Kharias (tribal)[48] of the Central Provinces say that the rice and cotton seed sprinkled at the crossroads is a guiding mark for the Ancestors. The Oraons (tribal)[49], also of the Central Provinces, sprinkle a line of rice from the crossroads to the grave or pyre so that the soul of the deceased may find its way back to the house. The Warlis (tribal)[50] of the Bombay area, on the other hand, sprinkle grain along the way in order to prevent the spirit of the dead person coming home at night. The spirit is believed to be detained until dawn by eating the grains and does not dare visit the house at daybreak.

The halt on the way to the funeral ground is practised by all four groups. The brahmins of the South should, in theory, make three halts but according to Thurston[51] this custom has fallen into disuse, and the corpse is taken straight to the cremation ground where it is laid down and moved three times, a pathi bali being offered on each occasion. Whilst the corpse is set down, it may be circumambulated by the mourners. Where the ethnographers mention the direction of the circumambulation it is usually, but not always, said to be in the inauspicious

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[48] Russell v.II p.450

[49] Russell v.II p.308-9

[50] Save p.128

[51] Thurston v.I p.301

direction; the corpse may be pure at this stage of the funeral but it is not auspicious. One exception to this custom is that the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[52] of the South circumambulate the corpse three times in the auspicious and three times in the inauspicious direction, demonstrating a more ambivalent attitude towards the body. The explanation of the practice of halting on the way to the funeral ground which is given by the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[53] and the Mālas (outcastes)[54] is that it allows the dead person to recover. They say that in the past corpses have come to life; the servants who conduct the deceased to the kingdom of Yama have been known to make mistakes and take one person for another. Not all communities interpret the halt in this way, the Pardhans (tribal)[55] of the Central Provinces, for instance, insist that it is to give the corpse a rest.

The halt is often used as an opportunity to leave the food and money which have been tied up in the shroud (see 1b.). Other objects may also be left to assist the deceased in the next world; the Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus)[56] of Nepal, for instance, leave three bricks so the dead person may build a house in the next world. The caste Hindus of the South usually make their halt at the iḍukāḍu, a spot made to represent the shrine of Arichandra

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[52] Aiyangar v.4 p.15

[53] Dubois p.485

[54] Thurston v.VI p.373

[55] Hivale p.178

[56] Toffin p.245

(Hariścandra), the king who, according to the legend related in the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas became a slave of the Paraiyans and is believed to be in charge of the funeral ground. Food or money is often placed at the corners of the bier and then taken by a Paraiyan, or alternatively the Paraiyan may take the money and food which has been offered to the corpse earlier as viaticum (Eth.1b). Personal possessions of the deceased such as clothing and bedding are also offered to the idukādu. These are regarded as polluted items and are carried in the procession by the washerman, who, like the barber, is already polluted by reason of his profession (washing clothes which may be stained by menstrual blood etc.). The Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus)[57] of Nepal dump the deceased's polluted bedding in a similar place known as the chwāsa, though it is carried by the dead person's daughters-in-law rather than by the washerman. The deity of the chwāsa called Chwāsa Dya, is in this case associated with the pollution of rubbish which results from the impure secretions of the human body rather than with the specific impurities of the cremation ground.

Circumambulation of the corpse with a pot which is then smashed may also take place during the halt, though it is more commonly performed at the disposal of the corpse. It is at this point that those communities who use the 'lifestone' may pick up a stone to serve this purpose. This 'lifestone' is a stone which stands for a body after the destruction of the corpse, until the

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[57] Toffin p.245

spirit of the deceased can be made a new body from food offerings.

During the funeral procession the corpse may be turned around. In such cases it is normally taken the first half of the way with the head facing back towards the house and then reversed so that for the remainder of the journey it faces towards the funeral ground. More often, the bearers rather than the corpse are reversed, in the South changing sides, in the Bombay area changing from front to back. No explanation is recorded for this practice but the Mādigas (outcastes)[58] of Mysore, who do not reverse the body, but carry it from the outset facing the cremation ground say that to carry it facing the village would be like bringing a corpse into the village and would bring calamity, while Parry[59] states that he has often been told the body goes to the cremation ground head first because that is the way a baby is born.

The only accompaniment to the high caste and brahmin funeral processions is the sound of the bearers calling upon Rāma, the only exception being that of the Śreṣṭhas[60] (caste Hindus) of Nepal who use musicians. Apart from this exception, the use of music is confined to low caste communities, tribes and Liṅgāyats. The Pramalai Kallar (low caste)[61] of Madura say that they use

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[58] Nanjundaya & Iyer v.IV p.163

[59] Parry p.81

[60] Toffin p.245

[61] Dumont p.247

music to help detract from the sadness of the occasion; the Liṅgāyats use it because funerals are held to be joyous occasions.

Whereas most Hindus and some tribes carry the corpse on a ladder-like bier which is constructed for the purposes of the funeral and disposed of at the funeral ground, the Liṅgāyats place the corpse on a vimānam (vehicle), a highly decorated chair. The Liṅgāyats do not halt on the way, neither do they throw food, as the deceased is supposed to have reached heaven and does not need protection or feeding. The Pramalai Kallar (low caste) of Madura use a hired palanquin for their procession rather than a bier and the corpse is conveyed through the village preceded by untouchable women and an orchestra.

The close identification of the chief mourner with the deceased seen during the preparation of the corpse (Eth.1c) continues during the funeral procession where nothing is allowed to come between the corpse and the fire carried by the chief mourner. The close identification of the chief mourner with the deceased means that he also takes on the vulnerability of the corpse. As before (see 1c.), iron is used as a protection for one whose close contact with the corpse makes him, like the body, vulnerable to demon attack.

In Southern India the low castes and outcastes use the barber as a priest at funerals, though not at the auspicious events like marriage. This is probably a development from his

more restricted role in the higher caste funerals, where he merely shaves the male mourners. Already associated with death impurity by reason of his profession, it is understandable that he has become funeral priest to those too low in the caste system to qualify for the services of a Kārta brahmin (the brahmin death specialist). At this low level in the caste system the idea that the cremation is the antyeṣṭi and the chief mourner the sacrificer has all but disappeared. The funeral fire is more associated with death pollution and is often left to the care of death specialists (see 1f).

The idea that the way to the cremation ground is fraught with the danger of possession and pollution for the corpse is particularly strong among the higher castes and the brahmins, i.e. those castes which conceive of the cremation as the antyeṣṭi. Among the caste Hindus and brahmins, the use of bearers of the same caste as the deceased is intended to prevent the corpse from pollution by the touch of a lower caste. The corpse's purity is further protected by the bearers' wearing ceremonially pure clothing. Yet although the caste Hindus and the brahmins guard the purity of the corpse all the way to the funeral ground it has nevertheless polluted its garments and bedding to such an extent that they must be disposed of in areas of special impurity.

When the funeral party toss coins and food along the way to be picked up by the poor and the untouchables they are not only giving alms on behalf of the deceased; since the untouchables,

according to traditional karmic belief, owe their lowly status to evil deeds in past lives, the funeral party could also be said to be feeding personifications of the polluting demonic forces which inhabit the way. It is interesting that although the tribal groups throw food along the way like the Hindus, they interpret the ritual quite differently, as part of processing the spirit rather than the corpse.

According to the editor's footnote in the Dubois account, a halt is made on the way to the cremation ground because if the corpse should revive after reaching the pyre dire consequences would result and the revived person would not be allowed to return to the village. Thus, for the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins there is, in theory, a point of no return after which the effect of the death ceremonies cannot be reversed; the person who returns to life after this is in a state of living death; he has undergone irreversible processing with the aim of changing him into an Ancestor. Return to life has interrupted the sequence of ceremonies and he is as dangerous as any other dead person for whom funeral rites are incomplete and will remain so until his re-death allows the completion of the processing which has already been started.

In Southern India the Paraiyans are masters of the cremation ground's presiding deity, Arichandra, and so when the chief mourner placates them with gifts of food and money he not only ensures the smooth running of the funeral in the temporal sphere but also in the spiritual sphere. It is interesting to note that

what may earlier be offered to the corpse as viaticum may later be offered to the Paraiyan as rent for the funeral ground, a pattern which is repeated at the disposal of the corpse.

A possible explanation of the reversal of the corpse is that it is an attempt to disorientate the spirit of the deceased so that its journey to the funeral ground is one way and it cannot return to haunt the house. Certainly the Baigas (tribal)[62] of the Central Provinces believe they prevent the spirit returning to the house when they adopt a zig-zag course in their funeral processions. In a cyclical universe a person must be born into the realm of death in order to be reborn. Measures to prevent his returning to the land of the living as a ghost, such as the reversal of the bier, ensure that he returns properly as a human (rebirth as another type of life-form is possible in theory but in practice families always seem to think of their members being reborn as humans). As we have seen, for the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins the halt is the point of no return up to that moment the way is open for the dead person to come back, beyond the halt the deceased is counted among the ghosts and must be kept away from the dwellings of the living. From now on, although offerings may be made to the ghost of the dead person at the house, the general aim is to separate it from the world of the living, gradually driving or enticing it away from its old home.

Although where music is used it is usually of a sort peculiar to funerals, for the higher castes it has inappropriate

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[62] Elwin p.293

auspicious symbolism. Indeed the low caste and Liṅgāyat funeral processions with their music, vimānams and palanquins resemble the progress of a god through the village at a religious celebration. The fact that Pramalai Kallar hire the palanquin which conveys the corpse suggests that their ideas about purity and impurity of the corpse are not the same as amongst higher castes. The bier used by the higher castes is newly made and therefore pure and at the disposal of the corpse is destroyed, having become polluted by contact with the body. The Pramalai Kallar, on the other hand, convey a corpse palanquin which presumably has been used for countless other corpses and in the eyes of the higher castes would therefore be highly polluting.

Stage 2. Disposal Of The Corpse.

2a. Methods Of Disposal Of The Corpse.

Amongst the caste Hindus and brahmins cremation is generally thought to be the ideal method of corpse disposal. It is however, also the most expensive and amongst those castes which practise cremation it is frequently stated by the ethnographers that the poor members of these communities resort to burial or, if that is too expensive, throwing the body in a river. One of the greatest problems faced by Thames Water Board officials in their attempts to clean up the Ganges is the rotting of corpses which have been thrown in by those simply too poor to afford cremation. The holiness of the river means that, according to popular belief, consigning a body to its waters will compensate for any deficiencies in ritual procedure. The filming team of the B.B.C. 'Forty Minutes' programme[1], covering the story of the attempts to clean up the Ganges, recorded two men disposing of the corpse of their friend in the middle of the Ganges at Vārāṇasī, too poor even to afford the ropes to tie the body to a stone to weight it down. Pollution problems are also caused by families who can afford some wood but not enough to burn the corpse properly. Several crematoria are either at the planning stage or under construction at Varaṇasī to try and alleviate the problem, but when a manager was interviewed at one of the construction sites[2] he expressed his doubts about the project, saying that people

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[1] 'Thames Wallah'.4/2/88

[2] ibid.

would not want to use the crematoria because by tradition cremation must be with wood not electricity, that probably only the very poor who could afford no wood at all would use them.

Those who normally practise burial will often use fire in their rituals. Many communities head their funeral processions with a fire pot carried by the chief mourner (1e.) and circumambulate or touch the corpse with a burning firebrand before interment. The Telegu Bhatrāzus (caste Hindus)[3] of Mysore make a corpse out of darbha grass on the third day after burial and cremate it with the ceremonies that would be accorded to a real body, after which the ashes are also treated as if they were those of a real cremation. The Jugis (caste Hindus)[4] of Bengal, who like many Śaivites practise burial, touch the corpse's lips with fire before filling in the grave. This is said to distinguish the funeral from that of an ascetic or Muslim.

A notable exception to the use of fire in burials is that of the Liṅgāyats. They prepare a very elaborate grave approximately nine feet long by five feet wide with three steps each a foot wide. At the bottom of the grave a platform three foot wide is made to one side with a niche scooped out facing north or east (north east being believed to be the direction of Kailāsa). The corpse is stripped and placed on the platform cross-legged. The liṅgam is taken out of its case and tied to the neck or right arm. The guru places his right foot on the corpse's head and the

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[3] Nanjundaya & Iyer v.II p.271

[4] Risley v.I p.359

body is then placed in the niche with bael leaves and flowers which have been offered to Śiva in worship. The grave is then filled.

The way that fire is used in burials suggests that they are in fact substitute cremations. There seems to be a strong feeling that cremation is the appropriate method of processing the corpse even amongst the low castes whose ideas about the corpse as a sacrifice are not so highly developed. In orthodox belief, burial is strongly associated with the disposal of the corpses of ascetics, who are believed to have achieved release and therefore do not need processing in order to become Ancestors. They have passed out of the cycle of rebirth completely and never become ghosts, so their bodies are holy objects and no pollution is attached to them. It is dangerous to do this ceremony for an ordinary person who has become a ghost and it is understandable that those who practise burial should seek to distinguish the ceremony from the disposal of an ascetic's corpse.

Moffatt[5] describes the Liṅgāyat method of disposal as an attempt to deny pollution and turn the orthodox funeral on its head. It is certainly a denial of death pollution but not so much by turning the orthodox funeral on its head as by adopting the method of disposal used for the ascetic, the one category of person which orthodoxy recognises as unpolluted by death. In an orthodox funeral the disposal of the body is the time of greatest

[5] p.119

pollution but for the Liṅgāyats the guru's power is such that he can purify even a corpse at burial. Moffatt[6] draws a parallel between the structure of the Liṅgāyat grave and the architecture of South Indian temples and suggests that the niche in which the person is buried corresponds to the temple wall where the image of the god is kept. Burying the corpse as the god Śiva, the divine ascetic, in a facsimile temple is an emphatic declaration of the purity and auspiciousness at the point which in most funerals is the most inauspicious and polluting.

2b. Rites Concerning The Spirits And Functionaries Of The Cremation Ground.

As has been seen in the previous section, it is necessary to obtain either the cooperation of or control over the spirits and the functionaries of the funeral ground in order to ensure that the corpse may be properly sacrificed. The outcastes who work at the funeral ground are placated with gifts of money and goods to ensure the smooth running of the funeral. In the case of the Southern caste Hindus, these gifts to outcastes also control the presiding deity (Eth.1e), though other methods may also be used. The Tiyans (caste Hindus)[7] of the South seek to scare away the spirits of the cremation ground by having Panans beat drums while the body burns. Amongst brahmins the cooperation of the spirits and deities is obtained by offering homa (ghee) into the sacrificial fire both before and during the actual cremation.

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[6] ibid.

[7] Thurston v.VII p.84

These offerings are variously described by the ethnographies as being for Agni (the god of fire), Yama (the god of death) and the spirits of the cremation ground. The brahmins and Chetris (caste Hindus)[8] of Nepal actually use the corpse itself as an offering to control the spirit of the funeral ground, taking a small piece of flesh from the corpse before cremation and burying it for the demon who eats corpses (kryad rakṣa ko bhag). They say that if this is not done, the demon will be angry and return with the funeral procession to trouble the bereaved family.

Some brahmins place piṇḍas (rice balls) on various parts of the body. In the case of the brahmins of Kānara[9] this is normal practice, but in the case of the Chitpāvan brahmins[10] of Poona is only done if the deceased died at an inauspicious time.

The homa offerings of the brahmins prepare the cremation fire so that Agni 'cooks' the body as a sacrifice and carries it to heaven rather than destroying it, but Agni is only the transporter; the corpse's ultimate destination is Yama, who must be induced with the aid of the homa to accept it and leave the living alone. Indeed, it could be said that the corpse is the ultimate offering by which the dead person's relatives hope to placate the god of death and the spirits of the cremation ground. Thus the cremation is not only the first stage by which a dead

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[8] Bennett p.99

[9] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XV pt.I p.127 & 166

[10] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.149

person is transferred from the unpleasant state of being a ghost to that of an Ancestor, it also attempts to placate Death, who has entered the world of the living to take one person and who might come back to take more lives.

Like the one _piṇḍa_ offered at the cremation ground by other brahmins, the _piṇḍas_ offered on the corpse can be seen as offerings to the spirits of the cremation ground but they may also have a further significance. According to the Vedic funeral ceremony, an animal can be sacrificed and used as a covering for the human corpse. Its kidneys are laid on the corpse's two hands, the heart on the dead person's heart and the omentum on the face (Ved.2b). The purpose of this covering is to act as a sacrifice to Agni Kravyāda, the fierce, burning, destructive element of Agni, so that the corpse is left for the Jātavedas fire, the other component of Agni which will cook and transport the body to heaven (Ved.2b). As _piṇḍas_ can represent the body members (Eth.2c), they provide a vegetarian substitute for the Vedic animal sacrifice, satisfying the Kravyāda so that the corpse is not destroyed but cooked by the Jātavedas. It is interesting that the Chitpāvan brahmins use _piṇḍas_ on a body which is, because the death occurred on an inauspicious day, technically unsuitable material for sacrifice and therefore more at risk than a normal corpse from the destructive element of Agni. The _piṇḍas_ in this case may act as a pure body for the sacrifice so that the destruction of the impure body is not important. It is possible that the rice thrown over the corpse's face by the Nambūtiri

brahmins[11] of the South and the rice smeared over the face of the body by the Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus)[12] of Nepal also serve as protection for the corpse from the destructive element of Agni.

2c. Offerings To The Corpse.

At this second phase of the funeral rites, gifts may again be given to the corpse. Amongst the Hindus, these gifts usually take the form of rice, water and coins placed in the corpse's mouth immediately before cremation. In the case of burials some groups place a stick on top of the corpse's head, which is removed after the grave has been filled, so that the mourners can give a drink to the corpse directly, but most lay the gifts at the head of the grave after it has been filled. The Jetti (caste Hindus)[13] and the Pāchevārs (caste Hindus)[14] of Mysore put gold into the mouth of the corpse believing that this satisfies all his worldly desires. The Jugis (caste Hindus)[15] of Bengal bury the corpse with a bag of four cowries which they believe will be the fare for Chavan, who ferries the deceased across the Vaitaraṇī. The final gifts given to the corpse by tribes are often more elaborate than those made by Hindus but the explanations for the rite are similar. The Kawars (tribal)[16] of

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[11] Thurston v.V p.214

[12] Toffin p.246

[13] Nanjundaya & Iyer v.III p.477

[14] Nanjundaya & Iyer v.Iv p.487

[15] Risley v.I p.359

[16] Russell v.II p.397

the Central Provinces, for instance, offer a little sesame, cotton and rice on the grave, believing that through this gift the deceased will be provided with seed grain in the next world. Several tribes believe that if the deceased is not given gifts then his ghost will make them suffer for their omission. The Savaras (tribal)[17] of South India burn all the deceased's possessions with him including, it is said, his money, because,"If we do not burn these things the kulba (spirit) will come and ask us for them and trouble us." The Gulgulia (tribal)[18] of Bengal pour spirits into the dead man's mouth and kill a fowl so that the spirit may not come back and trouble relatives with bad dreams.

Among the Pramalai Kallar (caste Hindus)[19] of Madura, the relatives of the dead person pretend to feed the corpse with rice which is then dropped into a basket held by an untouchable. The Kawars (tribal)[20] of the Central Provinces afford another instance of objects being offered first to the corpse and then to someone else. If there is a burial rather than a cremation, a dish, drinking vessel and cooking pot are placed on the grave along with foodstuffs. These utensils are later taken by a Dhobi (washerman).

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[17] Thurston v.VI p.325

[18] Risley v.I p.303

[19] Dumont p.248

[20] Russell v.II p.397

As in Eth.1d, the idea behind the gifts to the corpse is that they benefit the spirit of the deceased. In the case of the Jugis, the cowries seem to be an interesting substitute for the brahminical gift of a cow. These gifts, however, are not purely for the benefit of the deceased. As several tribal communities explicitly state, if the dead person is not contented he will make them suffer as he suffers. Thus gifts which attempt to help the deceased are also a measure to control the dangerous ghost. As will be seen in other rites, brahmins and the higher castes tend to favour explanations to do with helping the ghost while tribes tend to think in terms of preventing the ghost from harming the mourners.

At one level, when the Pramalai Kallar give food which they have offered to the corpse to an untouchable, they are simply paying a funeral ground functionary for his services. The fact that an untouchable is being offered food which has first been offered to the corpse, however, suggests that there is a correspondence between the two, and that both are representatives of the deceased. The outcastes make good ghost representatives since their connection with death pollution and funeral grounds and their low spiritual status makes them closer on the scale of beings to the ghosts than the castes above them. Although the Kawars use the services of a brahmin during their funeral rites, it is the washerman, already polluted by reason of his profession, who takes the goods which have been rendered impure after being offered to the grave. Again, he seems to be acting as

a representative of the deceased, accepting things which have first been offered to the corpse. He is closer to the ghost on the scale of beings than the brahmin who performs certain of the other funerary rites, and therefore is a more suitable representative of the dead person's ghost.

The <u>piṇḍas</u> offered on the corpse (Eth.2b) by some brahmin communities can be seen not only as offerings to the spirits of the cremation ground but also as an offering to the corpse. They can be interpreted as food for the deceased, for the <u>śrāddha</u> offerings by which the dead person is sustained both as a ghost and as an Ancestor take the form of <u>piṇḍa</u> offerings in most brahmin communities. At another level the <u>piṇḍas</u> laid on the corpse can be seen as a new body for the dead person, for after the cremation the relatives have to build a new body for the deceased out of <u>piṇḍa</u> offerings (Eth.4d) and until this is constructed the ghost cannot even eat. Here, <u>piṇḍas</u> are laid on various parts of the body before cremation anticipating the members of the new body which will be made out of <u>piṇḍas</u> in the ceremonies following the funeral.

<u>2d. The Pot-Breaking Ceremony and Skull-Cracking Rites.</u>

All groups have a pot-breaking ceremony, which usually takes place once the pyre is burning or after the grave has been filled. The standard ritual is that the chief mourner circumambulates the pyre or grave with a pot of water. At the end of each circumambulation a hole is made in the pot by another person, allowing the water to flow out. In the Bombay area, the

holes in the pot tend to be made with a stone which afterwards becomes the 'lifestone', thought to represent a temporary body for the deceased. At the end of the final circumambulation, the pot is smashed by the corpse's head. Amongst the Southern low castes and outcastes, it is the barber (see le.) who puts the holes in the pot and in a few instances it is he and not the chief mourner who carries the pot round the grave. The Nambūtiri brahmins[21] of South India say that the pot-breaking ceremony symbolises that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges and this is also the explanation offered by the Nayars (caste Hindus)[22] of Cochin. It thus acts as a final cleansing of the corpse with water representing that of the Ganges, the river which can purify all sins. Many communities believe that it is by this rite that the chief mourner is constituted heir and that after breaking the pot he must not look at the corpse again but must go straight home.

Interestingly, in Crooke's ethnographic accounts of the North West Provinces and Oudh, no mention is made of the pot-breaking ceremony. The Hindus and tribes are however frequently said to perform kapāla kriyā (the skull rite) in which the skull is broken at the funeral ground, the participants believing that this allows the spirit to reach the other world.

In the case of the Kurmis (caste Hindus)[23] of the Central

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[21] Thurston v.V p.215

[22] Iyer v.II p.93

[23] Russell v.IV p.75

Provinces, both rites are practised. When the body is half consumed, the son takes up a piece of wood and strikes the skull seven times to break it. He then takes up on his right shoulder an earthen pot full of water with a small hole in the bottom. He walks around the pyre with it in an anticlockwise direction, stands facing south and dashes the pot to the ground crying out "Oh my father." The account of the Kurmi funeral acknowledges however, that the skull-cracking ceremony is not always performed. Kapāla kriyā is not a pleasant ritual and in many cases appears to be optional, only carried out by those who can find it in themselves to perform the gruesome task of cracking their own relative's skull. It is far more common, if the corpse is cremated, for the relatives to wait for the skull to crack of its own accord in the heat of the funeral fire. At burials only the pot-breaking ceremony is performed, except where the burial is for an ascetic, when the head may be cracked with a coconut as practised by the Shenvis (brahmins)[24] of the Bombay area.

At a theoretical level the corpse is believed to be not wholly dead until the skull is broken. In the Punjab and North West[25] it is thought that a man is still alive on the pyre because life consists of ten elements, one of which, the dhanjiye, persists for three days after the others have ceased. The other nine elements cease at death but the tenth element remains and causes the body to swell if nothing is done. The seat

[24] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XV pt.1 p.150

[25] Ibbetson & Maclagen p.845

of this tenth element is the skull, which must be smashed in order to set it free. The Rājputs (caste Hindus) of Gujerat[26] put the firebrand to the corpse's mouth before they light the pyre, warning the spirit of their intentions with the words,"Flee O soul, the fire has come," indicating that they too still believe the spirit to be present in the corpse. As one of Parry's[27] informants put it,"He does not die but is killed. He dies on the pyre." If a man is still 'alive' at the time of the disposal of the corpse then technically it is the chief mourner who is responsible for his 'death'. While most of Parry's informants shied away from this explicit conclusion, one did specifically say[28],"Cremation is violence (hatyā) and death pollution a consequence of that violence (sutaka)".

Padfield[29] suggests that the pot-breaking ceremony is a feeding rite providing water for the deceased to drink during its fiery ordeal. Srinivas[30] suggests that it is a rite of segregation breaking the bond between the living and the dead and this seems to be supported by the fact that once the pot has been destroyed the chief mourner must leave the funeral ground immediately without looking back. He must not do anything which

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[26] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt.I p.149

[27] p.80

[28] ibid.

[29] p.234

[30] p.151

might re-establish the links with the world of the dead which have been so carefully broken in this ritual: to have any further contact with the corpse would encourage death and the denizens of the funeral ground to follow the relatives back to the village.

Since the Sanskrit word kapāla (skull) can also mean pot it is likely that at one level the pot-breaking ceremony is also a skull-cracking ceremony to encourage the spirit to leave by the brahmarandhra rather than the anus. The fact that the pot is usually broken somewhere near the head of the corpse and in the case of the Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[31] actually on the corpse's head supports the interpretation of the pot as a symbolic skull. If this is right then, except in the North West Provinces and Oudh, the skull tends to be cracked both literally and symbolically during the cremation. Again we see an efficacious rite being repeated in the literal and symbolic cracking of the skull. As far as the relatives are concerned, the more methods are tried to encourage the spirit to leave by the brahmarandhra, the less the likelihood of failure and the greater the possibility of the deceased receiving extra benefit.

The idea that it is the cracking of the skull which releases the spirit ties in with the concept that the pot-breaking ceremony is a rite which constitutes the chief mourner successor, because it is only at that moment that the person truly 'dies' and is succeeded by his heir. As has already been seen, the cremation is theoretically a self-sacrifice, and the chief

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[31] Dubois p.486

mourner actually becomes the deceased (see 1e.) from the point of view of ritual. Yet the fear that the deceased's spirit might harbour some resentment towards the person who 'killed' him nevertheless remains. The fact that it is frequently said that the chief mourner must not see the corpse again after performing the pot-breaking ceremony suggests that relatives are frightened the spirit of the deceased will vent its anger on the person who cut it off from the land of the living.

As Parry[32] points out, the idea that a man is still alive until his skull is cracked is somewhat esoteric and at another level it is acknowledged that a man is dead once the physical signs of life are extinguished and ritual seems to reflect these two levels of understanding. Those who crack a coconut at the time of death (Eth.1d) will also perform the pot-breaking ceremony at the disposal of the corpse.

2e. Protective Measures Against Ghosts.

The disposal of the corpse is a highly inauspicious part of the funerary ceremonies and the fear of the ghost of the deceased or ghosts in general is very great. Circumambulation of the pyre and grave is in the inauspicious direction and many groups take measures to forestall trouble from the ghost. Several low castes and tribes bury their corpses face down, which is said to prevent the ghost getting out and troubling the living. The Muria (tribal)[33] of the Central Provinces break the bier and set pieces

[32] p.80

[33] Elwin p.148

round the pyre to represent the driving in of nails,"to close the house" and prevent the ghost walking. In the case of cremations, very great care is taken that the corpse is fully burnt. Amongst several of the caste communities in the Central Provinces, if the pyre goes out or the corpse is taken by a dog or some other animal, then the relatives are put out of their caste and have to give a feast before they are re-admitted. According to the Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus)[34] of Nepal, if the corpse is not fully burnt then the ghost will return to haunt and torment its near relatives. For the Hindus of Sirkanda[35], if the corpse is not properly burnt, the danger is not from the ghost of the deceased but from other ghosts. No remains are left, especially of women, lest the ghosts of the cremation ground utilize them for nefarious purposes or their own sexual enjoyment.

The creation of a barrier between the funeral ground and the village is common to all groups. This may be a string of darbha grass, under which the mourners leave the cremation ground, or a thorn branch with a stone placed on top, over which the mourners must step. Among the Mangar (tribal)[36] of Bengal, one of the mourners stands on top of the stone with incense and the other mourners return home by stepping over the barrier through the smoke. This is thought to prevent the ghost from returning home with the mourners and establishing itself in its old haunts. It

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[34] Toffin p.246

[35] Berreman p.406

[36] Risley v.II p.75

is believed to be in the form of a miniature man, who is unable to get through the thorns, while the smell of incense, to which all spirits are highly sensitive, prevents the ghost from surmounting the obstacle on the shoulders of one of the mourners. The brahmins and Chetris (caste Hindus)[37] of Nepal, walk back home over a fire and thorn branch,"so sickness and demons cannot follow them back from the cremation ground," while the Hindus of Sirkanda[38] say that the thorn branch is to imprison other ghosts, preventing them from returning to the village and disturbing the ghost of the deceased.

Some lower caste Hindus and tribes throw a pebble behind them on leaving the funeral ground. Where this is practised it is always interpreted as barring the ghost of the deceased rather than ghosts in general. Amongst the Pardhans (tribal)[39] of the Central Provinces, the pebble is thrown away after having been passed down the line of mourners. The eldest son leads the mourners in single file out of the funeral ground and picks up a pebble with his left foot, quietly passing it to the man walking behind him and so on down the line until the last man throws it away without looking round. It is thought that the soul of the deceased gets into the pebble, which is thrown away and thus prevented from returning.

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[37] Bennett p.99

[38] Berreman p.407

[39] Hivale p.179

The ambiguous attitude of the mourners towards the deceased is demonstrated in these rites. The deceased is the dead relative who must be protected from ghosts and assisted to become an Ancestor but he is also a ghost himself and, like all ghosts, dangerous and unpredictable, a being from whom the relatives must be protected. As before (Eth.2e) it is the high castes who tend to emphasise the former, while the tribes are more concerned with the latter.

Pebbles are also associated with the spirit of the dead person in a more positive fashion amongst the higher castes and brahmins, as 'clothing' for the ghost and as a focus for food offerings (Eth.4a).

Stage 3. Rites Concerning The Return Home, The Collection Of The Bones Or Attention To The Grave And Associated Offerings.

3a. Bathing After The Funeral And The Start Of Mourning Restrictions.

It is common in all groups for the chief mourner and relatives to bathe after the disposal of the corpse. According to the Vaiṣṇava brahmins[1] this is called the mṛtika snāna (bath of the dead) and is supposed to be on behalf of the deceased whose body has just been consumed by the flames. This bath is supposed to refresh it after the fiery ordeal.

Mourning restrictions generally start immediately after the disposal of the body. Thus, the chief mourner is shaved, sleeps on the ground, avoids 'hot' food, abstains from sex and avoids pollution from outside influences by segregating himself from other people. He is usually joined in some or all of these restrictions by close relatives. Mourning restrictions are observed by all groups, though in the case of tribes they may be rudimentary and their emphasis on protecting outsiders from pollution rather than maintaining the mourners' purity. Liṅgāyats, however, do not observe mourning restrictions like other Hindus. Although most Jains follow the caste Hindu funeral pattern, the Osvāl and Parwār Banias of the Central Provinces[2], and the Osvāl Marwaris of Ahmadnegar[3] do not shave or observe any

[1] Dubois p.487

[2] Russell v.II p.156, 160

[3] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVII p.82

other kind of mourning practices, holding it to be against the Jain religion.

As has been seen, at a theoretical level, the corpse is 'alive' until the cremation; it is burnt to death on the pyre and the spirit suffers accordingly. In the mṛtika snāna the chief mourner and relatives act as representatives of the deceased and cool the ghost by cooling themselves. This bath also serves to purify the mourners after the most polluting phase of the ritual and it is often one of a number of purificatory measures such as chewing nimba leaves or taking pañcagavya. This purification not only removes the impurity of the last phase of ritual, but also prepares the mourners for the next stage in the funeral. The performer and participants are heavily polluted to those outside, but the mourners acting within the sphere of funerary ritual must be pure. In orthodox thought, religious ritual is only effective when performed by those who are ceremonially pure and no exception is made for funeral ritual but on the scale of values which supports this world of orthodox ritual by determining what is pure and impure, funerals are inherently polluting. Thus, when mourning restrictions come into force, in most cases after the disposal of the corpse, they operate on two levels. On the one hand, they resemble the temporary ascetic rules aimed at making an individual pure before certain religious acts. On the other hand, the segregation of the mourning family protects outsiders from their extreme pollution resulting from the death.

As might be expected, Liṅgāyats do not observe mourning restrictions like other Hindus because they believe that a Liṅgāyat goes straight to Kailāsa, therefore there is no need for the mourners to gain special powers through ascetic practices in order to process the deceased, neither does the rest of the community need to be protected from the bereaved family because there is no death pollution.

3b. Lamp And Basket Ceremonies.

On returning home, the mourners usually have to look at a light burning on the spot where the person died before they can return to their own homes. According to the Chitpāvan brahmins of Poona[4], this is to cool the eyes of the mourners which have been heated by the fire. The light is frequently kept burning throughout the period that the deceased is supposed to be a ghost and is extinguished on the day that the ghost becomes an Ancestor. Interestingly, the Chadārs (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[5] place the lamp at some distance from the house, while the Hindus of Bihār[6] light a series of lamps. The chief mourner lights the first on the evening of the funeral at the place where the person died. On the second day he lights a lamp a little distance from it, towards the door. The third day he lights a lamp further away again and so on, so that on the tenth day it is outside the door.

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[4] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII p.150

[5] Russell v.II p.401

[6] Grierson p.393

On the night of the funeral, tribes, outcastes and lower castes often place ashes or sand on the spot where the person died, along with a lamp, food and drink, covering the whole with a basket. The ashes are examined the next morning for signs that the deceased has been there. Any footprints are believed to be made by the ghost, which is usually thought to have passed into the animal to which the footprints belong. An absence of footprints tends to be interpreted as the deceased having an unfulfilled wish. Some communities are quite content with seeing the foot-marks of insects and birds, for their main concern is that the ghost has ceased to become disembodied, but for others the type of footprint is most important as it denotes the rank of life form in which the deceased is embodied. The Kunbis (caste Hindus) of Sātāra[7] for instance, hope for human footprints, which mean the deceased is reborn as a human, as opposed to those of birds and beasts which mean the dead person is reborn as a lower life form. The Nais (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[8] hope above all for the print of a cow's hoof which is held to prove that the deceased, in consideration of his singular merits has been reborn a cow. The Banjaras (caste Hindus) of Mysore[9] practise a variant of this rite in which the ashes of the pyre are examined for footprints. They believe that an absence of footprints is a positive sign, for the dead person has gone to

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[7] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XIX p.73

[8] Russell v.IV p.76

[9] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.II p.190-1

heaven; human marks mean that he is reborn as a man; cattle hooves show that he has taken their form and gone to a life of incessant toil and if the marks are jumbled together he is a ghost, hovering to attack.

Although the Chitpāvan brahmins interpret the ritual of looking at the lamp as a ceremony to cool the eyes of the mourners, the way in which the lamp is treated during the period that the deceased is supposed to be ghost suggests that it is also a representative of the dead person and that looking at the lamp after the return from the funeral ground is a form of homage to the spirit of the departed. In the case of the Hindus of Bihār, the progress of the lamp towards the door reflects and may indeed be thought to assist the progress of the ghost away from its former haunts and ties with the living.

The footprint rite is the first instance in the funeral rites of communication from the spirit world. Up until this point the relatives have been acting blind: they have performed certain rituals designed to process the corpse and the ghost, all the while knowing that unfulfilled wishes on the part of the deceased could jeopardize the whole procedure. They believe that their rituals are causing the ghost to move on from its troublesome and dangerous form but they have no proof. Unfulfilled wishes are an important impediment to the processing of the ghost as they make it resentful and disinclined to leave the world of the living. Extreme instances of unfulfilled wishes, such as a person dying

unmarried or a woman dying in childbirth necessitate special funeral rites (Eth.7). Interestingly, the interpretations of the footprints are always given in the present, rather than the future tense, a person is reborn as an human, animal or insect, yet in the majority of cases the ceremonies continue as if the deceased is still a ghost in need of processing. Indeed the footprints rite, even if the deceased has shown himself to be content, is very often followed by a crow feeding ceremony, in which the reaction of the crows is believed to indicate whether the deceased has unfulfilled wishes, a question which in theory has already been answered in the preceding ceremony. The use of several types of ritual to ascertain whether the ghost is content demonstrates the deep seated anxiety that accompanies all funeral ritual; the relatives need constant assurance that all is well with the dead person.

3c. 'Cooling The Cemetery' And The Bone Collection Ceremony.

Amongst the Hindu groups, if a body is cremated the chief mourner and relatives often pour water, milk and cow urine on the ashes of the deceased in a ceremony which tends to be referred to as 'cooling the cemetery'. This rite is practised by all groups and is frequently associated with the bone collection ceremony (sañcayana). According to the Chitpāvan brahmins[10], the purpose of this ceremony is to cool the ghost of the dead.

The bone collection ceremony is generally held on the second or third day but sometimes on the funeral day itself. The chief

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[10] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII p.150

mourner is usually responsible for this rite, sometimes throwing the bones straight into the nearest river or stream but very often gathering them into a pot which is disposed of at one of the sacred rivers when the opportunity arises. In the case of the Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus) of Nepal[11], however, the bones are gathered into a pot by cremation ground specialists and disposed of at five sacred places by the tenants of the dead person's relatives and when these agents return home they have to purify themselves. For the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins of the South[12], the rite requires that the chief mourner should bathe and putting on a pavitram (purifying) ring before he collects the bones. The chief mourner starts the ceremony by stepping forward with his left foot and picks up the bones with his left hand.

When the Kurmis (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces take the bones to the Ganges, they are tied in a cloth and carried at the end of a stick by the chief mourner, who plants this stick in the ground at night so that the bones may not touch the earth. Until the bones are properly disposed of, the family usually remains in a state of reduced impurity, unable to hold marriages or other auspicious events. This can obviously cause a great deal of difficulty for the family which, due to the constraints of time or money, cannot make the journey within a reasonable period after death. In such cases, sending the bones and ashes to the Ganges by parcel-post is a popular alternative.

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[11] Toffin p.246

[12] Dubois p.490

The 'cooling of the cemetery' appears to represent a further method of cooling the ghost, in addition to the mṛtika snāna (Eth.3a). In Vedic ritual (Ved.3c) the mantras used when the ashes are cooled are concerned with the quelling and pacifying of Agni, who has been aroused in order to burn the corpse, and the cooling of the deceased is only implicit in the ceremony but according to the Chitpāvan brahmins this latter function appears to be the primary purpose of the ritual.

The sañcayana, while demanding ritual purity of the performer is also inauspicious and impure. The performer is required to take a purificatory bath before the ceremony and until the moment of their disposal in the Ganges, the bones remain sacred objects to be protected from contaminating contact with the earth. At the same time the chief mourner uses his left hand for the performance of the ritual and until the bones are properly disposed of, the family remains in a state of reduced impurity, unable to hold marriages or other auspicious events. The left hand is not only inauspicious, it is also associated with impurity, being used to cleanse the body after excreting. In the case of the Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus) of Nepal, the impurity of the bones is dominant and the chief mourner has no direct contact with them; they are gathered into a pot by cremation ground specialists and disposed of by the tenants of the dead person's relatives and it is these agents who take on the impurity of the corpse.

3d. Offerings Associated With Bone Collection Or The Grave.

It is common for the bone collection to be accompanied by offerings made to the deceased. These offerings are not however confined to those who hold a <u>sañcayana</u> ceremony; similar offerings at the spot where the corpse was disposed of are also made by those who bury. If the offerings accompany a <u>sañcayana</u> then some of the ashes are often retained and made into a human shape which serves as a focus for the offerings. In the Bombay area it is also fairly common for brahmins to make the offering on a <u>vedi</u> (altar) which is set up on the spot where the person was burnt. Those who bury tend to use the grave as a focus for the offerings. Sometimes, as in the case of the Mādigas (outcastes) of Mysore[13], a figure rẹpresenting the deceased is drawn on top of the grave to which offerings are made but more often they are set on a platform put up over the grave or they are placed on the spot where the head was buried. Amongst the tribes, the offerings tend to be the foodstuffs of which the deceased was particularly fond and they are often accompanied by the sacrifice of a fowl. The Hindus make a more complicated two stage offering in which foodstuffs and or <u>piṇḍas</u> are offered first to the ashes, altar or grave and then to something or someone else.

Brahmins usually give first stage offerings of <u>piṇḍas</u>, often accompanied by other kinds of food while the castes and outcastes

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[13] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.IV p.164

tend just to offer foodstuffs. The Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[14] offer five piṇḍas on the ash 'body', corresponding to the order in which the bones were gathered, and say that they are for the ghost to eat. The Chitpāvan brahmins of Poona[15] offer piṇḍas in the shape of footprints and umbrellas, which are believed to ensure that the deceased has an umbrella to shade him from the sun and sandals to protect his feet from thorns on the way. Among the tribes and outcastes the first stage offerings are usually made to the ghost alone but amongst the caste Hindus, some of the food may be given to deities associated with death. Thus the Kammas (caste Hindus)[16] of South India place some of the food at Arichandra's shrine on their way to the funeral ground. The first stage offerings take their most elaborate form amongst the brahmins, who worship and then offer food to the ghost, Yama, Rudra and sometimes the Ancestors as well.

The second stage offerings aim to feed the ghost with the same food but by a different method. Thus in the case of the Paraiyans (outcastes) of South India[17], food is offered on two leaves, one at the head and one at the foot of the grave. The food from the former is taken and eaten by the men, while the food from the latter is eaten by the women. In the second stage

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[14] Aiyangar v.4 p.23

[15] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.1 p.151

[16] Thurston v.III p.104

[17] Thurston v.VI p.112

offerings of the Kammas (caste Hindus) of South India[18], the food offered to the man-shaped pile of ashes is then given to a Paraiyan, a barber, a washerman, and a Panisavan (mendicant caste). Other frequent recipients of the second stage offering are the crows. Like the footprint rite, they are believed to give an indication of the success of the funeral. To Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[19], crows represent evil spirits and the offering is intended to render them kindly disposed towards the deceased. If they refuse to accept the food then the dead man will become a captive of Yamalokaḥ (ie. the hells) despite all the mantras and purifying ceremonies that his relatives provide. In Gujerat[20] they say not that the crows are evil spirits but that the spirits of the dead pass into them. The Liṅgāyats[21], however, do not associate the crow with death but see it as an auspicious symbol of good fellowship and sociability.

The first stage offerings can be seen as the last offerings involving the corpse. Before the disposal of the body, the corpse is given offerings which the ghost is believed to receive due to its close link with its mortal remains. Here, offerings given either at the corpse's last resting place or to a corpse which

[18] Thurston v.III p.105

[19] Dubois p.487

[20] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt.1 p.382

[21] Ishwaren p.13

has been reconstituted from the ashes of the pyre are also believed to reach the ghost. The Southern Vaiṣṇavite practice of offerings pindas on the ash 'body', in addition to feeding the ghost, reinforces the ritual offering of a pinda on each of the next ten days to make a new body for the ghost. The Chitpāvan brahmins' pinda offering seems to perform a different primary function: the pindas, besides being a food offering to the ghost, also represent the gift of an umbrella to shade him from the sun and sandals to protect his feet from thorns on the way. This gift is repeated towards the end of primary pollution, when a brahmin is given an umbrella and stick along with various other gifts which the ghost is believed to receive.

The ghost is a dangerous, semi-divine being which must be worshipped but it is also helpless and hungry and must be fed with pindas and since its fate ultimately depends on the deities of death, they too must be included in the worship and the offering, for the successful ritual processing of the ghost depends on their cooperation.

In the second stage feeding rites of the Paraiyans the mourners act as representatives of the deceased and there seems to be no stigma attached to eating on behalf of the deceased so soon after the disposal of the corpse. This is probably because Paraiyans often represent the ghost in caste funerals. As already seen (Eth.2c), outcastes are the impure castes and therefore nearer ghosts on the scale of beings than those in the castes above them, thus making good representatives for the ghost in

caste funeral rituals. The barber and the washerman, by reason of their polluting professions and associations with funeral rituals are also obvious representatives of the ghost. The gift to the mendicant suggests that second stage offering of the Kammas is not only a feeding rite but also an almsgiving ceremony to increase the merit of the deceased.

As seen (Eth.2e) the position of the deceased is ambiguous, ghosts and evil spirits must be placated to protect him but he is also a ghost himself and this may account for the fact that the crow offering is described both as feeding the deceased's ghost and as placating the evil spirits. The connection between crows, Death and the dead is very strong and it is mentioned in numerous ethnographies that if a man sees crows copulating, the only way he can save his life is to send word to his friends that he is dead. The author of the Gujerat Gazetteer* says that the sense seems to be that the spirit of the crow is so enraged at being seen that he vows the death of the person who saw him but is pacified on hearing that the person is already dead. This interpretation fails to take account of the fact that ghosts are counted as a life form; they are conceived, are born and die like any other beings. The copulation of crows means that a new ghost will be born but the birth of a ghost necessitates the death of a human. The person who sees crows copulating fears he is watching his own conception in the world of the dead and the only way he can cheat his fate is by claiming

* Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XI pt.1 p.382

to be dead already. The Lingāyats[22], however, do not associate the crow with death and the view that it is an auspicious symbol of good fellowship and sociability represents another instance of their reversal of orthodox Hindu values.

3e. Planting Seeds.

Amongst the Idaiyans (caste Hindus)[23] of the South, the chief mourner makes a miniature plough and ploughs the spot where the body was cremated planting nine types of seed there. Among the Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[24], the chief mourner sows nine kinds of grain in a pot, and waters them to encourage them to germinate. The chief mourner of the Pramalai Kallar (caste Hindus)[25] of Madura sows the grave with nine kinds of grain and on the second day, three cow dung cakes are mixed with nine types of grain and plastered on the wall of the house at the place where the body was displayed.

No explanation for the ploughing of the cremation site and/or the planting of seeds is given in the accounts. In Vedic ritual the mantra accompanying the cooling of the cemetery states that the plants burnt by Agni are sown anew by the chief mourner (Ved.3c) and it is possible that the South Indian practice of planting seeds represents a survival of an element of the Vedic

[22] Ishwaren p.13

[23] Thurston v.I p.363

[24] Dubois p.488

[25] Dumont p.248

ritual. The planting of nine types of grain seed is associated with the South Indian marriage ceremony and this rite demonstrates the return to normal life and fertility after the disposal of the corpse. A ritual associated with fertility is not inappropriate in this context, since in a cyclical universe for every death there is a birth. The progression from death to Ancestor is not a sequence of transformations so much as a series of births and deaths. Ghosts are not insubstantial remnants of the departed, they are beings in their own right, albeit extremely low on the scale of life forms, who with the help of offerings made by relatives can achieve rebirth, first as Ancestors and later as human beings. After the disposal of the corpse, the relatives can look forward to the new life which follows death. The seeds which are encouraged to sprout by the Southern Vaisnavite brahmins, to mark the deceased's birth as a ghost are thrown away before the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, at which the deceased is believed to be born into the world of the Ancestors.

Stage 4. Offerings To The Ghost.

4a. Creating A Temporary Body For The Ghost.

In some tribes the mourning rites end with the third stage but in other tribes and amongst the Hindus there tends to be an intermediate period of some days between the third stage rites connected with the ashes or the grave and the final ceremonies at which the ghost becomes an Ancestor. Many communities make further offerings to the ghost during this intermediate period. Two notable exceptions are the Lingāyats and the Jains. Although some communities in these religious sects follow the Hindu practice of feeding the ghost in the days between the third stage rites and the end of mourning, on the whole they tend to make no offerings to the deceased during this period. Some rich Lingāyat families invite a jangam to the house on a couple of days and drink water in which they have washed his feet while others offer rudrākṣa berries to Śiva for ten days. The Jains usually make an offering to the temple god on some day before the final ceremonies in order to save the deceased from the torments of purgatory and hell.

It is believed that at the disposal of the corpse the strong links between the spirit and the body which it once inhabited are broken and the ghost is naked and without form. Thus, before the intermediate offerings take place, the ghost is often given a temporary body. In the tribes of the North West Provinces and Oudh, a bunch of sacred grass is frequently planted by a well or tank to act as a temporary body for the ghost. Amongst brahmins

and caste Hindus from all over India, the ghost is frequently encouraged to reside in a stone, sometimes called the jivkhada ('lifestone'). Often the 'lifestone' is the stone which was used in the pot-breaking rite and it seems that the ghost is thought to go into the stone automatically. Some communities, however, use a stone which has not been used in previous ceremonies and request the ghost to inhabit it; the Komatis (caste Hindus) of Mysore[1] do this by means of the preta āvāhana (ghost invocation).

The Nambūtiri brahmins[2] and the Nayars (caste Hindus) of Cochin[3] believe that the ghost resides in a palmyra leaf. The story is that when cremation was performed for the first time all the dasavāyus (the ten breaths), of which the body is composed were consumed in the fire with the exception of the dhananjayan, which flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some brahmin sages, who, by means of mantras, forced it into the palmyra leaf.

The Pulayans (outcastes) of Cochin[4] believe that the ghost takes up its abode in a mound of earth which the chief mourner erects on the south side of his hut. On the eighth day a devil driver comes to make sure that the ghost is actually present and not being kept under restraint by some deity.

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[1] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.III p.571

[2] Iyer v.II p.268

[3] Iyer v.II p.93

[4] Iyer v.I p.116

The ghost may be given more than one temporary body. Various brahmin communities of South India, for instance, set up two stones representing the deceased, one in the house and another one on the bank of a tank. They also provide the ghost with a body through a different ritual medium, giving offerings of water, rice, a piece of cloth, a lamp and money to a brahmin, these gifts being supposed to clothe the disembodied spirit.

The ghost body is not simply a refuge for the naked spirit, it is also used as a medium through which the deceased is given offerings and through which he is worshipped with libations and flowers etc.. The offerings to the ghost, however, are not confined to this temporary body. All Hindu communities and some of the tribes use several different channels through which they feed the ghost; it is fed not only as inhabiting a temporary body but also as a disembodied spirit and as represented by pindas, a lamp, a brahmin, a low caste person, a crow or some other animal.

Among some Liṅgāyats there is a tendency either to adopt the Hindu practice of feeding the ghost during the intermediate period or to substitute other rites in which the mourners undergo daily purification or make daily offerings to Śiva instead of the deceased. Social status is inextricably linked to caste status and when the religious tenets of a sect bar its members from practising certain rites associated with the higher castes, there is a tendency for the richer members of that sect, who wish to

claim a social standing appropriate to their wealth, either to follow the higher caste practices despite the conflict of religious theories or to introduce substitutes for that practice.

The mourners' picture of the ghost in this intermediate period is extremely fluid. It is thought to inhabit a body provided by the mourners, yet it is also a disembodied spirit and may also be present in a person or animal. This diversity of form provides the relatives with the opportunity to feed the ghost through several different channels thus minimising the risk of failure and providing them with greater peace of mind.

4b. Offerings To The Disembodied Spirit.

Offerings to the disembodied spirit usually consist of foodstuffs, water, milk, and sometimes tea. They are left at the house where the person died, at the spot where the bier was rested on the way to the funeral ground, or in a tree.

At the house a little food is often taken from the mourner's plates at each meal and put on a separate plate which is left for the ghost. This plate may be concealed from view by an upturned basket until the time comes for it to be replaced with the offering from the next meal. Some brahmins and caste Hindus also leave vessels of water and milk in the house for the spirit to drink. Some of the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins of the South[5] and the Deshasths (brahmins) of Dhārwār[6] and Bijāpur[7] hang a thread from

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[5] Dubois p.488

[6] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XXII p.85

[7] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XXIII p.88

the ceiling or a nail in the wall which they dangle into the vessels. This thread is believed by the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins to serve as a ladder for the prāṇa (spirit).

Milk and water vessels are also left on the eaves of the roof by the Hindus. According to the Pātāne Prabhus (caste Hindus) of Poona[8] and the brahmins of Gujerat[9], they set the water and milk on the eaves because the spirits of the deceased sit there for ten to twelve days after death. The Pātāne Prabhus believe that at sunset the ghost may bathe in and drink from the two plantain leaf cups of water and milk which they leave daily on the roof.

Trees are associated with a particular type of offering to the ghost in which jars of water and milk are hung up, pierced at the bottom, the holes then being partly blocked with darbha grass so that the liquid drips steadily onto the ground beneath. In the case of the Audhelias (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[10] this is an offering not to the disembodied spirit but to the dead person as represented by a fragment of bone brought from the cremation ground and buried under the tree. In the Punjab and the north West provinces, however, these jars are placed in the tree because they believe it is haunted by spirits.

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[8] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII p.231

[9] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt.I p.50

[10] Russell v.II p.47-8

It seems likely that the idea that trees and house roofs are haunted by disembodied spirits is connected with the fact that they are also perches for crows, who represent ghosts (Eth.3c). Indeed when foodstuffs, as opposed to liquids, are put on the eaves, they seems to be primarily interpreted as offerings to the crows rather than to disembodied spirits.

4c. Offerings To Objects, People And Animals.

Food offerings are often made to the ghost as represented by the lamp on the spot where the person breathed their last (Eth.3b). Foodstuffs are also often thrown to the crows, whose reaction as in 3b. is thought to indicate whether the deceased is contented. The crows may also be given food which has previously been offered to the 'lifestone' or some other representation of the deceased. Other animals may also be fed; the Coorgs[11], for instance, offer uncooked rice to fish in a pond or a lake in what they call the 'water sacrifice', in addition to feeding the crows. The tenth day śrāddha (memorial rite) of the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[12] closes with gifts of grass to cows and loaves to dogs as well as laḍḍu sweets to brahmins. In Gujerati popular belief the dog is associated with death and is thought to be able to see Yama and his messengers; a dog howling with its face towards a man's house foretells the death of one of the occupants. Most

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[11] Srinivas p.

[12] Stevenson p.161

middle and low caste Hindus in Gujerat[13] give sweet balls to street dogs before the body is taken to the funeral ground while the Meṣri Vāniās (caste Hindus) of Gujerat[14] feed dogs with food sent by the dead person's father-in-law, if the deceased was young.

People may also be fed in the mourning period, but this is a fairly unusual practice. The Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus) of Nepal[15] cook food on the seventh day and divide it into three offerings: one part is given to the crows, one part to a member of the Kusle caste (an extremely low caste of Tailor-Musicians) and one part is left on the eaves of the house. In this instance a low caste person is used by caste Hindus to represent the deceased, in the same way as has been seen in earlier rites, in a ceremony which uses three different methods of feeding the ghost at once.

Brahmins may also be given food on behalf of the deceased but this practice is confined to the brahminical communities. As has been seen in Eth.4a, the Southern brahmins give gifts of a cloth, rice and a lamp which are thought to provide a new body for the deceased. The brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār offer laḍḍus to brahmins after the tenth day ceremonies, while the Smārta brahmins of Mysore[16], in addition to giving the items which are supposed to secure a new body for the deceased, also perform a

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[13] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt.I p.377

[14] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt.I p.95

[15] Toffin p.247

[16] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.II p.482

śrāddha in which they offer a measure of rice, vegetables and a few annas to three brahmins on the first day, to four brahmins on the second day and so on until the tenth day. Similar śrāddha offerings known as nava śrāddhas are offered in addition to the above on the odd days up to the tenth day. Only the lowest grade brahmins or close relatives, who are already polluted, accept śrāddha during the period of primary pollution.

Giving grass to sacred animals, such as cows, on behalf of the deceased increases his store of merit. Amongst some Hindu communities, cows are given the food offered to crows for the dead person if the birds refuse to eat it, which suggests that they too can represent the ghost. The connection between dogs and death is likely to have arisen because Yama's servants are traditionally thought to be dogs (Ved.2b). It is possible that the feeding of dogs is thought to be a way of controlling death for by feeding dogs one may placate Yama's servants who are also dogs and thus prevent them claiming more victims from among those made vulnerable by their contact with death (Ved.2b). It is particularly important that they should be placated in the case of a young person's death when Yama has come and claimed an untimely victim. Dogs, because of their association with death, are close to ghosts on the scale of beings and therefore, like crows, may also represent the deceased, in which case feeding them would perform the dual function of keeping Yama away and satisfying the dead person.

Offerings to brahmins can be seen as a type of almsgiving, boosting the merit of the deceased and the chief mourner during the critical period when the latter constructs a new body for the dead person. The fact that the Southern brahmins believe that the gifts of a cloth, rice and a lamp can clothe the naked ghost, however, suggests that the brahmins are also representatives of the deceased, taking on the inauspiciousness and impurity of the ghost and thus performing the same service for the brahminical communities as the outcastes do for the caste Hindus. This view is supported by the fact that only low grade brahmins or relatives, who are under death pollution anyway, accept such gifts.

4d. Piṇḍa Offerings.

During the intermediate period brahmins, caste Hindus and outcastes may offer piṇḍas (rice balls) to the deceased in a pattern which varies from community to community; some give one per day from the disposal of the corpse until the final ceremonies; others give several piṇḍas daily for the same period, while some wait until the last day of the intermediate period, when primary pollution is lessened, and offer a number corresponding to the number of days between the disposal of the corpse and the beginning of the final ceremonies. There is no indication that the middle, low caste and outcaste Hindus believe that the piṇḍas have any other significance than that of assuaging the terrible hunger of the deceased. Among the brahmins, however, the piṇḍas are not only food for the deceased

but also the raw material from which the mourners construct a new body for the ghost. During the first ten days ten pindas are offered and each one is believed to form a different part of the new body for the ghost. They call the new body the yātanā śarīra (torture-body), the name given by the Garuḍa Purāṇa to the body in which the ghost suffers torment on his way to the kingdom of Yama. The mourners of several brahminical communities may have the Garuḍa Purāṇa read to them daily during the period in which this new body is formed, though this practice has fallen out of favour in recent years because the contents of the text are so horrific.

Piṇḍas are always offered first to the temporary ghost body, if such an object is used, though they may afterwards be offered to some other representation of the deceased, as in the case of several communities of Southern brahmins, who offer piṇḍas to the stone representing the deceased and then throw them to the crows. In the case of the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[17], who do not use an object representing the temporary body of the deceased, the libations and the worship which other communities give to the temporary body are offered to the new body as represented by the piṇḍas. Although the ghost, as represented by the piṇḍas, is worshipped, it is not considered auspicious; Viṣṇu, as represented by a knot of darbha grass, is invited to take part in the ceremony but at the end of the rite, when the god takes his

[17] Stevenson p.161

leave, the polite formula asking him to come again, which is part of worship on auspicious occasions, is not used.

While the lower castes seem to regard the *piṇḍa* simply as a type of food for the ghost, among the higher castes it performs a far more complex ritual function. It is food for the hungry ghost lodged in the temporary body or as represented by crows, but it is at the same time the material of the ghost's new body which it will inhabit in its next stage of existence. As might be expected, the ritual of the higher castes and brahmins reflects a greater knowledge of textual material while the lower caste ceremonies follow only its broad outlines. Thus, the lower castes retain the idea of a twelve month journey to the kingdom of Yama (Eth. 4e.) but the idea that during this period the ghost inhabits a body constructed by the mourners out of *piṇḍas*, which is hacked at and eaten by other ghosts and horrible monsters along the way, is absent.

4e. The Ekoddiṣṭa And Ṣoḍaśaka Śrāddha.

Caste and outcaste Hindus usually preserve the ghost body until their final rites. Brahminical communities, however, dispose of the ghost body on the tenth day after the funeral, two days before their final ceremonies take place. At this point, they believe the ghost has attained a new body consisting of the *piṇḍas* offered in the ten days after the funeral and is very hungry in its new form. The *ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha* (ceremony in honour of and for the benefit of one person) is thought to satisfy this

hunger and usually consists of a single _piṇḍa_ offering (earlier _piṇḍa_ rites often include offerings to the gods Yama and Rudra) and the feeding of a brahmin, who is believed to represent the ghost. Often the brahmin who represents the ghost is a close relation of the deceased, but some communities engage a Mahābrāhman, who is well paid for taking part in this ceremony. Amongst the Kurmis (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[18], it is of great importance to the dead man's ghost that the brahmin finishes all the food; if he does not do so it is thought that the deceased will fare badly. The Mahābrāhman often takes advantage of this by stopping in the middle of the meal and saying he has eaten all he is capable of, so that the relatives have to give him large presents to induce him to finish the food. If a Mahābrāhman is employed to represent the deceased at the _ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha_ then this ceremony is frequently combined with that of the gift of the necessities of life. Among the Vaiṣṇava brahmins of the South[19], the chief mourner will not eat the same food as the brahmin representing the ghost and cooks a separate meal for himself.

The brahmins may also perform a _ṣoḍaśaka_ (sixteen-fold) _śrāddha_. All Hindus and many tribes believe that after death the ghost sets out on an arduous twelve-month journey to Yama's kingdom after which he becomes an Ancestor, although most high caste and brahmin communities perform the ceremony of transfer to

[18] Russell v.IV p.79

[19] Aiyangar v.4 p.52

the status of Ancestor on the twelfth day. The _ṣoḍaśaka_ is thought to take the place of the _śrāddhas_ that would be held in twelve months after death to sustain the ghost on his journey if the transference of the ghost to Ancestor were held at the end of the year. It consists of sixteen _piṇḍas_ and/or a gift of cloths and vessels to sixteen brahmins. Although, in theory, the _ṣoḍaśaka_ replaces the need for any _śrāddhas_ in the twelve months after death, it is usual practice for a brahmin to be given food, vessels and clothing either daily or monthly until the end of the year. Middle and high caste Hindus, like the brahmins, tend to hold their final rites at the end of primary pollution, but unlike the brahmins will then go on to offer monthly _śrāddhas_ for a year after death. Low castes and outcastes tend not to hold their final rites at the end of primary pollution but to feed the deceased with _śrāddha_ rites for a year before performing the ceremony which transforms the ghost into an Ancestor.

As might be expected, the higher the caste the more complex are the feeding ceremonies which take place between the funeral and the final rite at which the deceased becomes an Ancestor. At the lowest level the ghost is fed simply through offering foodstuffs at the grave and feeding caste people there. Low to middle caste Hindus and some tribes have more complex rites using both foodstuffs and _piṇḍas_ which are offered not only to the grave or ashes but also to the deceased as represented by outcastes, stones, pots, crows and other animals. The high castes

and the brahmins have the most complex feeding rites, in which the deceased goes through two stages. Firstly he is the naked spirit supplied with a temporary body by the mourners. In this stage he is fed through the rites used by the low and middle caste Hindus with low grade brahmins taking the place of outcastes as ghost representatives. Secondly he is a ghost with a pinḍa body who is fed with the ekoddisṭa and sodaśaka śrāddha.

4f. The Gift Of The Necessities Of Life.

The gift of the necessities of life is not generally observed by tribes, outcastes and low castes, but it is common amongst middle, high caste and brahminical communities. It consists of such items as a cot, umbrella, sandals, vessels and clothing appropriate to the sex of the deceased. The gift may also include the Vaitaraṇī cow, which in some communities is given before death (Eth.1c). In the case of the Śresṭhas (caste Hindus) of Nepal[20], these items formerly belonged to the deceased, but it is more usual for them to be bought especially for the occasion. If the ceremony is performed before the final rites then the presents are usually given to a Mahābrāhman, in which case a similar set of gifts is often given to the family priest after mourning is over. Sometimes the gifts are given to the family priest alone; when this is done, the gifts are promised before the final ceremonies but not actually given until mourning is over. There is a serious social stigma attached to these gifts if they are received during the period of mourning,

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[20] Toffin p.250

and the Mahābrāhmans who do so are utterly despised by the Hindu community and sometimes made to live outside the village. There is no such stigma attached to gifts received after the period of mourning.

The gifts are believed to reach the dead man and aid him on his journey to the kingdom of Yama and in the life beyond: the umbrella shields him from the scorching sun; the sandals protect him from the thorns on the way; the vessels ensure he has water to drink; the cot ensures that he always has a bed to lie on in the next world.

If a Mahābrāhman receives the gifts he is normally escorted from the house immediately after the ceremony. Among the Śreṣṭhas (caste Hindus) of Nepal[21], a Bhā brahmin (the local equivalent of a Mahābrāhman) is given food containing fragments of the skull of the deceased and must eat a mouthful of it before being given the possessions of the deceased and escorted from the house by the unmarried women, who accompany him back to his own home to ensure he does not return, an act which would have disastrous consequences for the mourning household. In the Bombay area, the Mahābrāhman lies on the bed he has been given, which is then lifted and carried out of the house by four men. Men and women follow him for a short distance throwing stones and burning cow dung cakes at him. Sometimes the pelting is so fierce that the Mahābrāhman is in danger of losing his life and the police have

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[21] Toffin p.250

to interfere. According to the Chitpāvan brahmins of Poona[22] the brahmin who takes part in this rite is the preta (ghost), for which reason an outsider is usually chosen for the role.

The gift of the necessities of life supplements the sixteen śrāddhas which are meant to sustain the deceased on his twelve-month journey, but it also seems to be thought of as setting him up for life as an Ancestor, an existence in which one appears to require exactly the same domestic articles as in this world.

It is interesting that the gifts received after the period of mourning by the family priest are thought to benefit the deceased in the same way as those given before the final rites, but no social stigma is attached to them. This is probably because when the gifts are given during the period of mourning they form part of a rite of expulsion. The Bhā brahmin eats fragments of the deceased's skull before being escorted from the house, while the Chitpāvans say that the brahmin who receives the gifts is the preta and drive him away by throwing stones and burning cow dung cakes. The whole ceremony demonstrates the ambiguous attitude which the mourners have towards the ghost: the family give lavish presents, which they can often ill afford, so that he may be contented in the world beyond, but they also drive him, sometimes violently, from the house. The presents given to the family priest are received after the deceased has been transferred to the status of Ancestor. Thus, he represents the

[22] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII p.153-4

Ancestor rather than the impure ghost. In the case where the gifts are promised during mourning but given afterwards, the family fulfil their obligations to the ghost by offering them in spirit before the final rites but offering them in actuality only after mourning is over, so the family priest does not take on the extreme impurity and inauspiciousness of the ghost. The double performance of the rite, using both Mahābrāhman and family priest, increases the chances of the deceased's contentment in the world beyond but also has a social aspect. The family's priest performs all their normal domestic ceremonies while the Mahābrāhman is used only during the funeral rites, yet it is he who receives some of the most lavish gifts that the family ever gives. The repetition of the rite ensures that the priest who normally serves the family benefits from one of their richest ceremonial presents. In communities who promise the gifts before the final rites and give them afterwards, the Mahābrāhman is cut out altogether.

The recipient of the gift of the necessities of life acts as a channel through which the mourners provide the deceased with the articles necessary to ensure that he reaches the kingdom of Yama. The recipient is not, however, an automatic channel; there is always the implicit threat that he might choose to exercise control over the fate of the ghost through his power of refusal. If he declines the gifts because he does not feel them to be lavish enough, the relatives fear the deceased will not have the necessary resources to reach the end of the terrible journey to the kingdom of Yama and will forever remain a ghost. Thus, the

necessary resources to reach the end of the terrible journey to the kingdom of Yama and will forever remain a ghost. Thus, the lavish nature of the gifts reflects not only the mourner's desire to provide for the deceased in the best possible way but also to make sure there is no danger of the recipient refusing them as inadequate and thus preventing the transfer of the ghost to the status of Ancestor.

4g. Release Of The Bull.

Brahmins and high caste Hindus used to perform a ceremony in which a male calf was branded with the trident (the symbol of Śiva) and sometimes with the wheel (the symbol of Viṣṇu) and then ceremonially 'married' to one or more female calves and set loose to roam while the female calves were given to a brahmin. This was usually performed the day before the final rites took place, but occasionally formed part of the ceremonies transferring the deceased to the status of Ancestor. The terrible damage to local crops and the general chaos caused by the bullocks let loose in this ceremony has meant that in recent years it has either been abandoned altogether or takes place in a modified form, using bundles of grass as substitutes or giving the male calf to a brahmin along with the female calves. The Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[23] pray to Śiva to consent to the "deliverance of the bull" so that as a reward for this good deed of letting the calf free the deceased may find a place in heaven. According to the

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[23] Dubois p.494

Chitpāvan brahmins of Poona[24] the lowing of the bullock when it is branded takes the deceased to heaven and his first cry opens the gates of heaven for dead person to enter. The brahmins of Kāṭhiāwār[25] ask the male calf to help the ghost cross the river Vaitaraṇī and to be a witness at the court of Yama that the funeral ceremonies have been properly performed.

For the participants it appears that the release of the bullock rather than the marriage ceremony is the important part of the rite and it is on this that they base their interpretation, seeing it as the ritual mechanism by which the deceased is enabled to enter heaven. The explanations differ slightly as to how the release achieves this result: it is seen as a good deed whose merit accrues to the deceased, thus qualifying him for heaven; it is thought that the cries of the animal when it is branded cause the gates to open, and it is said that the animal acts as a witness to the correct performance of the funeral ceremonies. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins also use it as an opportunity to reinforce the gift of the Vaitaraṇī cow which they give before death. Since its primary purpose is to enable the deceased to enter heaven, it is a rite that belongs more properly with the final ceremonies and some brahmins do it on the day when the deceased becomes one of the Ancestors. The bullock's marriage ceremony interestingly does not feature in any of the

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[24] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII p.153

[25] Stevenson p.176

interpretations. It would appear that although the release of the bull was originally a fertility ceremony intended to generate wealth and prosperity for the community (G.P.4g), it became so firmly associated with the death cult that while its original fertility symbolism remains, it is interpreted solely in terms of helping the dead.

4h. The End Of Primary Pollution.

In the case of brahmins and the higher castes the end of primary pollution occurs on the tenth day, the same day as the ghost attains its new body and two days before the final rites. The mourners are then in a state of reduced impurity until the deceased becomes an Ancestor. The end of primary pollution also occurs a couple of days before the final rites in the middle and lower castes. They often observe longer periods of primary pollution than the higher castes and brahmins, but this is not always so. Like the higher castes, the mourners then remain in a state of reduced pollution until the final rites. Among those low and outcaste Hindus who perform their final rites a year or so after death, this means that the mourners remain in a state of reduced pollution for some months. During this period the chief mourner frequently observes dīkṣā (a religious vow), leaving the entire body unshaved and abstaining from sex, alcohol, tobacco and betel. In the tribes, the end of primary pollution tends to coincide with the final rites, if they are held within a couple of weeks after death. If the final rites are held a year or so after death, all pollution ends in the first couple of weeks.

Some outcastes practise the suppression of primary pollution until such time as they can afford to hold proper funeral rites. This is usually achieved by sealing a piece of cloth or a cow dung cake in a pot, which is kept in the corner of the house. While the pot remains sealed the family members can carry on their lives as normal, but when they can afford to perform the proper rites it is opened and pollution begins.

The end of primary pollution is marked by all groups with the purification of the house of mourning and the mourners. Fresh cow dung is smeared on the walls and floors of the house, the old earthenware vessels are destroyed and replaced with new ones. The family bathe, take *pañcagavya* and put on new clothes. In those castes which wear the sacred thread, the mourners will put on a new sacred thread and wear it in the auspicious direction (over the right shoulder and under the left arm) for the first time since the death.

According to *Manu-Smṛti*[26] primary pollution lasts ten days for brahmins, twelve days for *kṣatriyas*, fifteen days for *vaiśyas* and a month for *śūdras*; so in classical theory the lower castes observe longer periods of impurity than the higher castes. By the time of G.P., however, the variable length of pollution represents the ideal but in reality death impurity occupies a standard period of ten days for all *varṇas* (G.P.4h). The ethnography corresponds with the G.P. practice in that caste

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[26] 5:83

represents the ideal but in reality death impurity occupies a standard period of ten days for all varnas (G.P.4h). The ethnography corresponds with the G.P. practice in that caste Hindus as well as brahmins tend to observe ten days of primary pollution. Social and economic factors could well account for the change from variable periods of primary pollution of classical theory to the ten days of impurity for all varnas seen in G.P. and the ethnography. To adopt the length of primary pollution observed by the higher castes can boost a community's attempts to improve its social status, reinforcing its claim to be a higher caste than outsiders consider it to be. Furthermore, the adoption of a reduced period of primary pollution has great economic benefits, enabling the mourners to return to work far sooner after the death. Another way of coping with the economic problems caused by death pollution is seen among the outcastes who use ritual means to suppress impurity until such time as they can afford to pay for the necessary rituals and spend a number of days without work.

Stage 5. The End Of Mourning.

5a. The Caste Feast.

A lavish caste feast features in the final ceremonies of all groups. In the case of the tribes and outcastes it is often the only ceremony to mark the end of mourning and usually follows on immediately from the stage three rites at the grave. But among those outcaste communities who practise dīkṣa it is held at the end of the chief mourner's vow up to a year after the death. It is usually the most expensive ceremony of the tribal funeral; a Gond or Bhumia feast (Central Provinces), for instance, may cater for three to four hundred people and the mourning family will sell all their bullocks and grain and borrow money at exorbitant rates of interest in order to meet the expenses[1]. Tribes and lower castes interpret the caste feast as a meal in which the deceased participates in some way. The Tharu (tribal) of Bengal[2] believe that the scent and smoke of the feast refresh the deceased while the solid parts are consumed by the living. The Bhumij (tribal), also of Bengal[3], believe that a member of the tribe who is unconnected with the mourning family becomes possessed by the dead man's ghost and participates in the feast as the dead man. When he leaves the feast it is believed that the ghost goes with him. The Korwas (tribal) of Palamau[4] seem to

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[1] Fuchs p.341

[2] Risley v.II p.318

[3] Risley v.I p.126

[4] Bihār District Gazetteers: Palamau p.114

believe that the people at the feast eat on behalf of the deceased; the priest asks all present to take an a handful of food "in the name of N.N.".

Among caste Hindus and brahmins, the final feast is usually only one of several ceremonies to end of mourning and immediately follows from the rite which transfers the deceased from ghost to Ancestor. Caste Hindus often invite local brahmins to their final feasts though according to Lewis[5] in the Delhi area this had fallen out of favour by the late 1950s due to the influence of organizations like the Arya Samaj (a Hindu religious reform movement) which urge caste Hindus not to feed brahmins on ceremonial occasions because the custom merely encourages greediness among village brahmins, who they say are mostly illiterate and have no real knowledge of the Vedas anyway. Cows or young girls are now sometimes fed instead at the caste feast. All groups tend to use the occasion of the final feast to give a new turban and clothing to the chief mourner and this gift is considered to mark the assumption of his new role as head of the family.

Liṅgāyats will often finish their mourning rites with a caste feast. Sometimes this is held immediately after the funeral but more commonly it takes place on the eleventh, twelfth or thirteenth day after death, even if the community has not performed any ceremonies in the intermediate period.

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[5] p.50

In the tribes the transition from ghost to Ancestor is not clearly defined. Indeed, for most tribes an Ancestor is simply the ghost of a person who died some time ago, as opposed to the Hindu idea that ghosts and Ancestors are entirely separate states of being. The participants interpret the feast as a final meal for the deceased after which he is supposed to go away and leave the mourners in peace, not as a ritual mechanism which changes the ghost into an Ancestor. From then on he is included in any memorial ceremonies which the tribe may hold for Ancestors in general.

Although outcastes, Caste Hindus and brahmins use representatives of the deceased who are so strongly identified with the ghost that they may be said to be possessed, this possession is only at a very low level and the representatives retain their own personal identities. Among the tribes, however, the possession is complete and the person's identity is completely subsumed during the period of possession. The higher castes do not explicitly interpret the caste feast as a feeding ceremony, however, they do invite brahmins who in the context of the fourth stage offerings seemed not only to boost the deceased's merit but also to eat on his behalf. This would suggest that as among low caste and tribes the caste feast is a meal in which the deceased is thought to participate. The deceased takes part, however, not in ghost form but as an Ancestor. As Ancestors are free from the impurity attached to

ghosts, the caste feast is attended by ordinary local brahmins rather than low grade death specialists such as the Mahābrāhmans. It is interesting that according to Lewis the discrediting of brahmins has not caused the disappearance of this rite; instead, people have simply switched to using cows and young girls. Virgins are often used as brahmin substitutes in certain rites in North Indian communities where brahmins are not available[6], while cows have been seen in the fourth stage rites (Eth.4c) being fed along with brahmins on behalf of the deceased.

It would appear that the Hindu caste feast has persisted even among those Liṅgāyats who deny death pollution and hold no śrāddhas for the deceased. The caste feast is in keeping with celebratory nature of the Liṅgāyat funeral but it is interesting that it tends to be held not immediately after the burial but on the eleventh, twelfth or thirteenth day. When a community does not observe death pollution and holds no śrāddhas the end of mourning should, in theory, come immediately after the burial but this appears to be another instance (see 4a.) in which the Liṅgāyats follow high caste ritual practice and thus align themselves with communities of the highest social standing.

5b. Recalling The Spirit.

Some tribes and low castes end their mourning with a ceremony which is believed to recall the spirit to the house where the person died. This rite is usually held at the end of the third stage rites and may be associated with delayed third

[6] Thakur p.78

stage rites held on the ninth or tenth day after the funeral. It is normally followed by a community feast.

Sometimes the deceased is recalled as a disembodied spirit. The Oraons (tribal) of the Central Provinces[7], for instance, build a miniature hut outside the house of mourning and call, "Come your house is being burnt". A relative sits in the house watching the burning lamp and when it flickers it is believed that the dead man has returned to the house. Often the spirit is recalled as a fish, frog or insect. A typical form of the rite is practised by the Pardhans (tribal) of the Central Provinces[8]. The mourners send the daughter-in-law of the deceased to the river where she tries to catch a fish, saying,"Oh father-in-law if you really love me come into my hands". The fish is brought back to the home of the deceased and placed in a temporary hut. Some flour is spread on the floor and covered with a new basket. Later the basket is removed to see if there are any footprints in the flour and if there are, they say that the soul has returned. The fish is then thrown away and the feast begins.

The recall of the spirit is often seen as the rite which transfers the deceased to the status of Ancestor, as in the case of the Ahīrs (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[9], where a stone is washed with water from the pot in which the fish representing the deceased is held. The stone is then set up as a

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[7] Russell v.IV p.309

[8] Hivale p.180-181

[9] Russell v.I p.28-9

family god and given an annual sacrifice. Some communities, however, perform further ceremonies. The Gond of Eastern Mandla[10], for instance, after recalling the spirit transfer the deceased to the status of Ancestor (purkha) with a rite known as, "Uniting the deceased with Bara Deo". Bara Deo is the clan god thought to reside in a tree outside each village. The community usually waits until several people have died before holding the ceremony. The nearest relative of each dead person takes a piece of reed which is then hidden near the tree of Bara Deo. The reed is thought to contain the spirit of the deceased and as long as this life-force is not put to rest in this fashion it is an evil spirit (bhūta) and always tries to harm the surviving members of the family.

The ritual of looking for footprints in flour which has been spread under an upturned basket has already appeared in a different context with a different interpretation. In the stage three rites of some outcaste and low caste Hindus, flour or ashes are spread over the spot where the person died on the evening after the funeral and examined the next day for footprints, which are thought to indicate the form in which the deceased is reborn (Eth.3b). The explanation for the rite in Eth.3b is slightly anomalous in that it suggests the footprint ceremony is a final rite when in fact it is usually followed by ghost feeding ceremonies. Here, the ritual of the upturned basket and

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[10] Fuchs p. 342-6

footprints is one of the final ceremonies although the explanation is that it indicates the return of the spirit to the house rather than showing the form in which the deceased is reborn. Ideas about karma (automatic retribution and reward according to one's past actions) and saṃsāra (transmigration) do not feature in the traditional tribal explanations of what happens to a man after death but Hindu influence seems to have made itself felt in many tribal communities. The Gond and Bhumia of Eastern Mandla[11], for instance, say that once a man is united with Bara Deo he will stay there and will not return to the world. At the same time they say that the soul is reborn in a child, a cow or a fowl, just as Parmatma decides. As Fuchs points out, whenever the Gond and Bhumia speak of rebirth and transmigration they do not use the word Bara Deo for god but the non-tribal terms of Paratma or Bhagvan. This would suggest that the Bara Deo explanation is the original one and the ideas about transmigration and karma have been taken from Hinduism, from which come the terms Parmatma and Bhagvan, without any attempt to integrate the two.

It is possible that the ceremony of the upturned basket and footprints as it appears in the third stage rites represents the reinterpretation of an originally tribal rite in Hindu terms; the ceremony of recalling the spirit to the house becomes a rite which tells the mourners about the form in which the deceased will be reborn. In addition to this reinterpretation of the

[11] Fuchs p.347

footprint ceremony, further Hindu influence has resulted in the adoption of śrāddhas and Hindu end rites. The basket and footprint ceremony and the explanation which shows it to be a final rite are retained but what once might have been a tribal ritual with final rites following straight on from ceremonies at the grave is now Hindu in form and the footprint ceremony provides a false ending, as it is followed by a series of śrāddhas. Some caste Hindus and brahmins put an upturned basket over a lamp and food left on the spot where the person died but unlike the lower castes and tribes do not spread the floor with ashes and look for footprints. It is possible that this is a fully Hinduized remnant of the basket and footprint ceremony suggesting that those who perform it were originally tribes and rose in the caste system. The practice of holding the recall of the spirit on the ninth or tenth day after death may also be due to Hindu influence. The tribal end rite, its original explanation and its association with the feeding rites at the grave are retained but delayed so that the period of mourning corresponds with that of the Hindus. Such a delay also has the benefit of allowing the relatives some more time in which to raise money for the final feast.

5c.Piṇḍa Ceremonies.

Among Hindus the transfer of the deceased from ghost to Ancestor is frequently accomplished by means of a piṇḍa ceremony, characterized by the offering of rice or flour balls known as piṇḍas. The most basic piṇḍa ceremony tends to be performed by

the lower castes, outcastes and tribes. These groups usually offer pindas only in the context of their end rites and confine their fourth stage ceremonies to giving foodstuffs to the disembodied ghost. The number of pindas offered is extremely variable and they are usually worshipped with sesame, vermilion and incense before being thrown into water. After that the deceased is counted among the Ancestors.

A more complex pinda ceremony is practised by those castes who offer pindas as well as foodstuffs during their stage four rites. Pindas offered during the fourth stage rites are normally disposed of in water but in the final ceremony all or some of the pindas are offered to the crows. If the crows eat the pindas then the deceased is believed to have moved on from the ghost stage and become an Ancestor. If the crows refuse to touch the pindas then it is believed the deceased is still a ghost and the relatives promise to remedy any deficiency in ritual procedure and sort out any problems with his worldly affairs. If the crows still refuse to eat the pindas then the chief mourner makes a substitute crow out of kuśa grass and touches the pindas with this. Those who use a crow offering for their final rite do not usually make offerings to crows during their fourth stage rites. Those who do repeat the crow offering usually use a combination end rite which also includes the disposal of the 'lifestone' (Eth.5d).

The most complex pinda rite is practised by the highest castes and brahmins and is known as the sapindīkaranam ceremony.

The standard form of this ritual involves four _piṇḍas_. Three of the _piṇḍas_ are believed to represent the father, grandfather and great-grandfather of the deceased, while the fourth _piṇḍa_ represents the ghost. The chief mourner cuts this fourth _piṇḍa_ into three and merges one third with the ball representing the deceased's father, one third with the ball representing the deceased's grandfather and the final third with the ball representing the deceased's great-grandfather. This ritual is believed to transfer the ghost to the status of Ancestor. If the deceased is a woman, the three _piṇḍas_ into which the fourth is merged represent her husband's mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Some communities believe that the three divisions of the ball represent an actual division of the ghost into three parts; the head, which is joined to the _piṇḍa_ of the father; the heart, which is joined to the _piṇḍa_ of the grandfather and the feet, which are joined to the _piṇḍa_ of the great-grandfather. For this reason, they will not do the cutting themselves but call in a man of a special caste known as the Kāṭaliyās (cutters) and pay him to perform this violence on the ghost after which they refuse to look upon him ever again. The three enlarged balls are worshipped with various substances and then given to a crow or thrown into water. It is a common belief that the chief mourner will obtain a son if he sniffs the middle ball before disposing of them. After the _sapiṇḍīkaraṇam_ the deceased's great-grandfather passes out of the realm of the immediate Ancestors so the three _piṇḍas_ used in any subsequent _śrāddha_ ritual represent

the deceased, his father and grandfather. The Deshasths (brahmins) of Dhārwār[12] use a ball of flour instead of rice for the great-grandfather in the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam and call it the svarga pātheya (heaven-opening) piṇḍa.

Among those tribes whose only final rite is the caste feast, Ancestors are simply ghosts of those who died some time ago; there is no sense of a change of being and no real difference in ritual vocabulary between offerings to the deceased as ghost and offerings to the deceased as Ancestor. In the final rites involving piṇḍas, however, there is a definite sense of a change of being expressed in the fact that people use ritual forms when dealing with the deceased as an Ancestor which differ from those which they use when dealing with the deceased as ghost.

Among the high castes and brahmins simple piṇḍa offerings build a new body for the ghost while piṇḍa offerings to crows are thought to pacify evil spirits or ascertain whether the ghost has any unfulfilled wishes. Thus when the crow feeding rite is performed in the context of brahminical and high caste third and fourth stage ceremonies it does not pose any great problems for the mourners; if the crows refuse the piṇḍas, then it is a setback but the funeral rituals have not yet been completed and there is still time for the mourners to remedy the situation. When the ceremony is held as a final rite, however, and is supposed to indicate that the deceased has become an Ancestor,

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[12] Gaz. Bom. Pres. v.XXII p.86

the relatives,in theory, face the possibility of failure; if they cannot persuade the crows to eat the pindas then the deceased is locked into the form of a ghost and it is too late for the mourners to remedy the situation. In practice, however, if the real crows refuse to cooperate, the performer uses a substitute made of kuśa grass and so the mourners never fail to transfer the deceased from the status of ghost to Ancestor. It seems possible that the final rite involving crows has been adopted from its stage four context in higher caste ritual and has had to be modified in order to perform its new function successfully.

As Hershman[13] points out, while a woman is alive she never really belongs to her husband's lineage but always remains a latent member of her father's family line. Having a son is the most important step in a woman's changeover from her father's to her husband's lineage that can be taken during her lifetime but the changeover is never complete until after her death. In the Punjab[14] a woman changes into the clothing of her father's house on the wedding day of her son and when she dies her death shroud is brought from her father's village; but when she becomes an Ancestor, offerings are made to her at śrāddhas and Dīvalī only by her descendants and their wives and no ceremonies are performed for her at her father's village.

The idea of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam as the mutilation of the deceased is a logical extension of the theory that the body

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[13] p.172

[14] ibid.

constructed during the intermediate period is composed of *piṇḍas*; the *piṇḍa* representing the ghost in the ceremony is thought to be this new body, which is cut up during the course of the rite. This concept also reflects the fact that the *sapiṇḍīkaraṇam* is not so much a transformation as a rebirth in a different life-form, which is only achieved through the death of the ghost.

The belief that the chief mourner can obtain a son by smelling the middle ball in the *sapiṇḍīkaraṇam* suggests that there is some connection between the performer's grandfather and the birth of his son although this is never explicitly stated by the performers themselves. As O'Flaherty[15] points out, the *piṇḍa* is a food which symbolises the mingled substances of human procreation and is often said to represent a ball of seed, as in the horse sacrifice[16]. Thus, when the performer sniffs the *piṇḍa* he appropriates the raw materials of human procreation. Although there are some myths in which the spirits of the deceased are reborn in this way O'Flaherty argues that this is generally not the case and that the true significance of the *piṇḍa* is that it is a leftover (*ucchiṣṭa*) of an offering to the Ancestors and that it acts in the same way as leftover offerings to the gods (*prasāda*) which a woman may eat if she wants to become pregnant. Yet if this is the case it seems strange that the performer should sniff only the middle and not all of the *piṇḍas*. *Piṇḍas*, however, are more than just food offered to the Ancestors; they

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[15] p.6

[16] Śat.Br. 13.1.1.1-4

are also the Ancestors themselves, most particularly in the context of the _sapiṇḍīkaraṇam_, whose primary function is to merge the deceased with the Ancestors rather than feed them. Thus, the chief mourner is not merely partaking of the remainder of an offering to the Ancestors, he is sampling the essence of the Ancestor himself. The resulting pregnancy could actually be considered to be the Ancestor's rebirth, not merely like it as O'Flaherty maintains; the performer's grandfather is reborn as his own great-grandson, a recurrent theme among the tribes (Eth.6b). There is, however, an inconsistency in ritual if the performer's grandfather is reborn as his own great-grandson because he continues to be worshipped and given offerings as an Ancestor in the context of the _śrāddha_ ceremonies. It is possible that the sniffing of the middle _piṇḍa_ is a remnant of tribal ideas that people are reborn into the third generation of their own families which has been reinterpreted in general terms; the _piṇḍa_ simply represents the mingled substances of procreation rather than the grandfather who is to be reborn as his great-grandson. It is equally possible, however, that as in the tribes there is simply an inconsistency in belief about what happens after death and that the deceased can at the same time be both an Ancestor who takes part in _śrāddha_ ceremonies and a reborn human being.

5d. Ceremonies Using A Representation Of The Deceased.

Some castes, outcastes and tribes, particularly in the South of India, accomplish the transfer of the deceased from ghost to

Ancestor by using a representation of the deceased. Occasionally, as in the case of the Izhuvans (outcastes) of Cochin[17], the bones of the deceased gathered up at the sañcayana are retained during the intermediate period and their disposal into a tank, river or the sea marks the transfer of the deceased from the state of ghost to Ancestor. In some castes, as with the Guraos (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[18], the transfer is marked by the worship and disposal of the 'lifestone' (jivkhada). More often, however, those who use the temporary ghost body perform a combination final rite in which the 'lifestone' is ceremonially disposed of and the crows offered piṇḍas. Many communities set up a representation of the deceased only for the purpose of their end rites. This may be a bundle of kuśa grass; a figure traced on the ground where the person breathed their last; a brick on which a representation of the deceased is scratched; a mud mound constructed by the side of a river or a tank; or a pot or post dressed in the deceased's clothes. In most cases this representation is worshipped, offered foodstuffs and then ceremonially discarded. Sometimes crows are fed as part of the rite and occasionally piṇḍas are offered to the image.

Brahmins and high castes also use representations of the deceased besides piṇḍas during the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam. These representations are employed in the feeding ceremony which precedes the worship and the merging of the piṇḍas. This feeding

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[17] Iyer v.I p.325

[18] Russell v.III p.180

ceremony includes offerings to the Viśve Devas (gods) and the Pitṛs (Ancestors) as well as to the ghost. The Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmins[19] use brahmins to represent the ghost, Ancestors and gods. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[20] employ brahmins for the Ancestors and gods, inviting them on the day before the ceremony in the belief that the spirits of the departed can then enter the brahmins during the night in readiness for the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, but they usually employ a bundle of darbha grass to represent the deceased because brahmins are unwilling to take on the inauspicious and polluting role of ghost. In the case of the Chetris (caste Hindus) of Nepal[21], bundles of grass are used for the gods and Ancestors as well. In this feeding ceremony, the gods, Ancestors and ghost are placed in separate squares marked out on the ground. The performer wears his sacred thread in the inauspicious direction whenever he enters the squares containing the ghost and the Ancestors and in the auspicious direction when he enters the square containing the gods. If he enters the square containing the deceased, he must purify himself before entering either of the other two squares. The piṇḍa representing the deceased is kept in the ghost's square until the decisive moment of the ritual, when it is divided into three and merged with the three Ancestors' piṇḍas which are kept in the Pitṛs' square.

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[19] Dubois p.494

[20] Stevenson p.182

[21] Bennett p.105

As with the _piṇḍa_ ceremonies, ritual forms which are used by the lower and middle castes as final rites are used by higher castes and brahmins as fourth stage ceremonies; among the higher castes and brahmins, the worship, feeding and disposal of a representation of the deceased carries him from the state of formlessness lodged in a temporary body to that of a ghost with a body made of _piṇḍas_. Again as might be expected, it is the brahmins and high castes who employ the most elaborate rituals using representations of the deceased and it is they who demonstrate most clearly the difference of status between ghosts, Ancestors and gods. Ghosts are so polluting that the performer of the final rite must purify himself before dealing with the other two levels of being. Ghosts are also highly inauspicious and the performer must wear his sacred thread in the inauspicious direction. The Kāṭhiāwār explanation for the necessity of inviting the brahmins on the day before the ceremony suggests that the brahmins are thought of as being possessed by those they represent and though the possession is not of the extreme kind seen in the final ceremonies of the tribes (Eth.5a), brahmins are understandably unwilling to be possessed by the deceased and take on his inauspicious and impure nature. Ancestors are not impure and brahmins will represent them in ceremonies but they are not auspicious so the chief mourner wears his sacred thread in the inauspicious direction. They are, however, not as inauspicious as ghosts and brahmins representing them wear their threads in the

normal, auspicious direction[22]. At the highest level are the gods, who are both pure and auspicious, as demonstrated by the fact that the performer wears his thread in the auspicious direction when dealing with them. The transfer of status is emphasised by the fact that the piṇḍa representing the deceased is moved from the area representing the ghost to that of the Ancestors for the merging ceremony.

5e. Opening The Gates Of Heaven.

Many middle caste Hindus in Southern India practise a rite known as vaikuṇtha samārādhana (winning Viṣṇu's heaven), which is thought to open the gates of heaven for the deceased and normally takes place on the evening after the rite which transfers the deceased to the status of Ancestor. It usually takes the form of a pūjā performed at the local temple and a butter throwing ceremony. The butter throwing ceremony may take several forms. Among the Agasas (caste Hindus) of Mysore[23], the chief mourner performs pūjā to the god and throws three balls of butter at the image saying,"O god! The deceased might have thrown stones at you, but now for him we throw butter. Have mercy on him and open the door of svarga (heaven) for him to enter." Among the Toreyas (caste Hindus) of South India[24], the mourners go to the local temple where a brahmin performs pūjā for them and shuts the door of the temple. The chief mourner with his back to the temple,

[22] Stevenson p.183

[23] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.II p.25

[24] Thurston v.VII p.182

throws a little butter on the doors which are then opened by the brahmin. This is then repeated twice more.

The vaikuṇṭha samārādhana is not on the whole associated with the brahmins and high castes and where it does appear is not in the distinctive form seen in the middle caste funeral rites. The Komatis (caste Hindus) of Mysore[25] hold a vaikuṇṭha samārādhana on the day after their sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, in which they feed brahmins, while the Shenvis (brahmins) of Kānara[26] call their final caste feast the vaikuṇṭha samārādhana.

The vaikuṇṭha samārādhana is a distinctively Southern ritual and is normally only practised elsewhere by communities who originated in the South, as in the case of the Shenvis of Kānara. It appears to be a Southern middle caste equivalent of the bull release which among the high castes and brahmins is believed to gain the deceased's entry into heaven (4g.). Those high castes and brahmins who have a vaikuṇṭha samārādhana ceremony either do not perform a bull release, as in the case of the Shenvis, or interpret it differently, as in the case of the Komatis, who say that releasing the bull rids the deceased of his piśāca character.

Most Hindus seems to believe that the mourning ceremonies achieve a two-fold purpose, that of a change of being, in which the ghost becomes an Ancestor and that of achieving the dead

[25] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.III p.572

[26] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XV pt.I p.168

person's entry into another realm, in which the deceased leaves the places he frequented when alive and enters heaven. Among the high caste and brahminical communities and some middle caste communities these two goals are achieved through separate end rites but lower down the social scale the participants believe that the rite of transfer also enables the deceased to enter heaven.

According to orthodox brahminical theory, the deceased, having become an Ancestor, is judged in the court of Yama according to his past deeds. If his karma is good, then he goes to one of the heavens where he enjoys the fruit of his past actions; if his karma is bad, he is sent to one of the hells to suffer for his past actions; if the deceased has a mixture of good and bad karma he may be sent to heaven and hell in turn. When the deceased has experienced the time in heaven or hell appropriate to his past actions he is reborn in a form befitting his karma. Thus, the brahminic release of the bull tends to be interpreted as a rite which accumulates great merit for the deceased bringing him enough good karma to enable him to enter heaven. In the South the bhakti tradition has caused the ceremony which gains entry into heaven to take a different form. Although found in Śaivite and other sects, bhakti is particularly associated with Southern Vaiṣṇavism and its followers believe in a god of absolute love, mercy and grace. Bhakti has no need of 'works'; one should relinquish all consideration of actions supposed to yield merit or demerit, for this can reduce one's

trust in god's grace, love and willingness to save all who are devoted to him. In disregarding the importance of traditional religious ceremony it seriously undermines the position of brahmins, whose social status is based on their role in orthodox ritual; thus, it is a type of religion which has its greatest following among caste rather than brahminical communities. The vaikuṇṭha samārādhana is a ritual in which the mourners throw themselves and the dead man upon the mercy of Viṣṇu and it is through the god's grace rather than through any merit of the deceased that he goes to heaven.

Stage 6. Memorial Ceremonies.

6a. Memorials.

Many communities set up some kind of memorial for the deceased. Among some tribes and low caste Hindus it simply consists of a few stones marking the grave, on which members of the family leave foodstuffs of which the deceased was particularly fond. Some of the richer Hindus construct quite elaborate tombs with pots hung above them in which they leave offerings to the deceased. Liṅgāyats also often build tombs, at which relatives periodically leave flowers and lamps. In addition to marking the grave, several tribal communities set up large memorial stones, poles or platforms by the roadside near the village boundary or even in the village itself. The tribes who set up these memorials believe that they are representations of individual Ancestors and periodically offer them foodstuffs and worship. In some tribes these memorials are only erected for important people, who are supposed to become especially powerful Ancestors. In other communities, however, every Ancestor should, in theory, have his or her own memorial, though in practice, poor families often wait until a number of people have died and then set up one memorial to represent several relatives. Sometimes the memorials are carved with an image of the deceased and in the case of those which represent several Ancestors great care is taken that the number of carvings correspond exactly to the number of dead, otherwise, it is believed, another person will die for every extra figure. Among the Muria (tribal) of the

Central Provinces[1], it is thought that the memorial stones grow in size if the soul of the dead is satisfied with the arrangements for him. If the stone grows, it brings good fortune to its family but if it falls or becomes crooked it is thought to be an indication that the dead person is angry and feels neglected and it is put straight and offered whatever sacrifice the local priest recommends before some dreadful calamity can overcome the family. In some places it is thought that there is no need to worry if the stone goes crooked after twenty years, because after this time the deceased is completely mingled with the Ancestors and does not exist as a separate entity. The installation of these monuments is falling out of favour with the tribes, mainly due to the expense, for the erection ceremony usually involves a feast and the sacrifice of cows, pigs and chickens, but also due to the influence of Hinduism, which has led to the abandonment of cow sacrifice (at least in public ceremonies) and the tendency to tombs for the dead rather than the traditional monuments.

Some tribes and low castes instal a representation of the deceased in their houses. Sometimes these representations are simply stones or pebbles but they may be more elaborate images carved out of wood or cast from precious metal. The installation of the representation usually marks the transfer of the deceased from the status of ghost to that of Ancestor, after which it is periodically worshipped and given food offerings along with

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[1] Elwin p.161

images of other Ancestors. Those communities who set up Ancestor images either do not use representations of the deceased during their fourth stage rites or, if they do, use a different style of representation for the Ancestor from that used for the ghost.

In the case of the Liṅgāyats, the tomb and the offerings appear to be simply memorials of the deceased; when the dead person goes to Kailāsa, the family's responsibility towards him ends and any further ceremonies are simply by way of worship and remembrance and not essential to his well-being. Among other Hindu communities and the tribes, however, it is believed that the family's responsibility to the deceased does not end when he becomes an Ancestor and that they must continue to feed him as they did when he was a ghost. Like the ghost, the Ancestor is thought to be absolutely helpless in that he is dependent on living relatives for sustenance but he is also extremely powerful in that he can influence family affairs for good or evil. Whereas ghosts can only bring calamity to a family, Ancestors are capable of bringing both good and bad fortune. They are therefore less feared than ghosts but nevertheless treated with caution. This caution is particularly strong in the case of the spirits of powerful people. Those who erect memorial stones only for important members of their community usually deal with other Ancestors communally in an Ancestor pot (Eth.6d) or by joint ceremonies for them. The spirit of the important person must be dealt with separately because the power wielded during his

lifetime is believed to go with him beyond the grave and can only be controlled by containing his spirit in a memorial stone and offering it separate propitiation.

As with the stage five ceremonies, there is a tendency to use ritual forms when making offerings to the Ancestor which differ from those used when dealing with the ghost; those who use stones, poles, pots and platforms to represent Ancestors tend not to use them in their stage four ceremonies. Among many tribes outcastes and low castes, there seem to be no formal rituals for the individual Ancestor which correspond to the higher caste anniversary of death rites; Ancestors are often individually represented and may receive formal offerings as individuals but in formal rites they are usually fed and worshipped as a group.

6b. Ceremonies For Reborn Ancestors.

It is a common belief among the tribes that the deceased will be reborn again, usually into a child of the same sex in his or her own family in the third generation i.e. as his or her own grandchild. Several tribes place identifying marks of vermilion or soot on the corpse before burying it and look for corresponding birthmarks on children born into the family. When similar marks are found they know that the Ancestor has been reborn. Other tribes hold a divining ceremony placing a grain of rice in a bowl of water which contains rice grains representing various members of the family who have recently died. When the child's rice grain comes into contact with one of the others the parents know which Ancestor has been reborn and give the child

his or her name. A family will still continue to worship and feed a representation of the Ancestor even after he is deemed to have been reborn.

It would appear that an Ancestor may exist simultaneously as a new human being and as an image. According to several ethnographers the tribal theologians explain this inconsistency by dividing the spirit into two or even three elements. One element is said to be reborn but the other elements are variously said to go to the tribal god, remain near the grave, trouble the relatives in dreams and live in the Ancestor's image. This theory is also used to explain the seemingly inconsistent attitude towards the ghost, which in many tribes is prevented from returning to the village after burial (Eth.2e) and then ceremoniously recalled at the end of mourning (Eth.5b): the spirit confined to the burial ground is said to be the evil spirit (mari, bhūta), while the spirit brought home is said to be the life-force (jīva, prāṇa ,hansa). Hivale[2], however, acknowledges that this is his own interpretation and that the tribal theologians of the Pardhans never explicitly say that the soul divides into several elements although such an explanation would be the only possible way in which to integrate their various ideas about what happens after death. In other cases too this theory of the soul's division seems to have arisen as the

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[2] p.174

result of questioning by the ethnographer. According to Elwin[3], "It was not until I had thoroughly discussed the matter with the Dewar Kotalwahi and his two wives that the matter was cleared up and then mainly through the acute theological perceptions of his junior wife." Perhaps the participants only try to rationalize the seeming inconsistency of their beliefs when confronted by the ethnographer, but ordinarily just hold a number of conflicting ideas about death without questioning how they relate to each other.This would require sensitive and detailed study in the field.

6c. Anniversary Ceremonies For Individual Ancestors.

Some tribes and many Hindus hold a feeding ceremony on the anniversary of a person's death. Among the low castes and outcastes, this tends to take the form of a caste feast in which the deceased is believed to participate: food is offered to a representation of the dead person and to crows. Among caste Hindus it tends to take the form of libations, feeding brahmins and crows and offering piṇḍas. It is not considered very becoming to the dignity and position of a brahmin to attend as a guest at a śrāddha except if it is for his relations. People from brahmin communities, therefore, where possible, arrange the performance of the rite within their own family group. Those of lower caste invite brahmins who are not over punctilious over matters of good form (perhaps because they are poor). Some communities like the

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[3] p.294

Kammas (caste Hindus) of South India[4] and the Rautias (caste Hindus) of Bengal[5] perform only one anniversary ceremony for a person and after that only hold rites for the deceased as included among the Ancestors in general. Jains hold anniversary ceremonies for individual Ancestors but not all communities interpret them as feeding rites; the Jains of Kānara[6], for instance, hold ceremonies on the anniversary of death believing that they save the deceased from the torments of hell. The Jains of Mysore perform śrāddha on the anniversary of death for ten years after which they believe that the departed soul must be born elsewhere or freed from bondage. They still, however, feed the castemen on the anniversary of death. Liṅgāyats do not tend to hold any ceremonies for individual Ancestors.

Many Hindus perform feeding rites for individual Ancestors during the pitṛpakṣa (Ancestor fortnight[7]), which is held throughout India during the dark half of Bhādrapada (August/September) and at the beginning of Āśvina (September/October). On the same day of the lunar fortnight as that on which a man died (mahāl), his soul is believed to return to the house and hover about waiting for his son to feed him. Sometimes the deceased is fed as an individual only in the

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[4] Thurston v.III p.105

[5] Risley v.II p.206

[6] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XV pt.I p.236

[7] A festival of the dead which first seems to make its appearance in Purāṇic times (Gar.6c,Ved.6c)

context of the pitṛpakṣa, but among the higher castes both his anniversary and his day in the Ancestor fortnight are observed. The anniversary ceremony is often known as a man's śrāddha and the pitṛpakṣa rite as his pakṣa. In the case of female Ancestors the anniversary alone is observed and no service is held on the mahal. In addition to the anniversary ceremony, caste Hindus and brahmins may also perform the mātāmaha or dauhitra (mother's father or daughter's son) offering on the last day of the pitṛpakṣa. In this śrāddha a boy remembers his maternal grandfather.

Among low castes, outcastes and tribes ceremonies for individual Ancestors only tend to extend to the performer's father and mother, his grandmother and grandfather and their parents being included in the ceremonies for Ancestors in general. The brahmins and higher castes believe that the Ancestors of three generations should have anniversary ceremonies performed for them. In practice there is a tendency either to abbreviate or to omit the anniversary ceremonies for the grandparents and great-grandparents or to perform them as part of the father's anniversary ceremony. Among the Chetris (caste Hindus) of Nepal[8], for instance, the family simply offers a plate of uncooked rice, spices, vegetables, curd and fried bread, known as sidha to their family priest on their great-grandfather's anniversary instead of performing the standard śrāddha with libations and a piṇḍa. Among the Chetris the full śrāddha for the

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[8] Bennett p.111

great-grandfather tends only to be practised by those who are wealthy or very orthodox, although it is thought that its performance brings great benefit to the family, as the village saying goes, "If you want to become wealthy, perform your great-grandfather's śrāddha".

It is interesting that some Jains perform anniversary śrāddhas and feeding ceremonies, because according to orthodox Jain theory after death the soul moves into a new embryo within a single moment (samaya); thus the idea of śrāddha is doctrinally invalid because as Jain points out[9], a soul which goes to its next body in one moment cannot be fed, propitiated or dealt with in any other way by those left behind. It is possible that, as with the Liṅgāyats, the social prestige attached to high caste ritual has caused Jains to adopt ceremonies quite contrary to their beliefs but anniversary ceremonies may also have been retained because fears about ghosts and Ancestors override orthodox theory and people perform śrāddhas just to be on the safe side.

6d. Ceremonies For All The Ancestors.

Some tribes, low castes and outcastes do not hold any ceremonies for individual Ancestors but always remember them as a group. Among these communities, formal ceremonies in which the Ancestors are fed take place in the context of tribal and caste festivals, particularly at the beginning of the agricultural

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[9] O'Flaherty ed. p.234

year, at harvest time and in Bhādrapada and Āśvina. These ceremonies take the form of offerings to Ancestor images, animal sacrifices and caste feasts and occasionally involve possession of a member of the community by a particularly important Ancestor who comments on the affairs of the living and makes demands for offerings. Among those tribes who keep a pot to represent the Ancestors, the caste feast may consist either of rice which has been periodically dropped into this jar during the year or foodstuffs cooked in this pot especially for the occasion. The tribes, low castes and outcastes frequently say that if the Ancestors are not propitiated, they will trouble people in dreams or even possess them.

Among middle, high caste and brahminical communities, the most important annual ceremony for Ancestors occurs during the pitṛpakṣa. Even if they perform no rites for individuals, they remember the Ancestors as a whole on the day known as sarvapitṛ amāvāsyā (All-Ancestors New Moon). The ceremony takes the form of caste feasts, piṇḍa offerings and the feeding of brahmins and crows. Many middle caste Hindus in the South set up a pot (kalaśa) to represent the Ancestors and offer it clothing, vermilion and foodstuffs on this day. Many Liṅgāyats also offer food and clothes to Ancestors in general on sarvapitṛ amāvāsyā.

Although no anniversary ceremonies are performed for female Ancestors in the pitṛpakṣa, mothers and women who die before their husbands are remembered as a group on a day in the Ancestor fortnight known as avidhavā navamī (unwidowed ninth). In the

South female Ancestors are also remembered on other occasions (particularly before weddings and when the spirit of a dead wife is proving troublesome to her successor) with a ceremony called huvilya, in which a kalaśa is set up in their name and given offerings of food and female clothing.

The other major annual festival concerned with the dead which is observed by most Hindus is the Feast of the Lamps (Dīpāvali, Dīpalī, Dīvalī), which occupies the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of the dark half of Āśvina (the time of the autumn equinox)[10]. In many ways the festival is a celebration of the new year; debts are paid off, merchants close their accounts in anticipation of new wealth and offerings are made to Laksmi the goddess of prosperity. The festival is associated with several Purāṇic myths whose underlying idea is that demons and Ancestors play a crucial role in the acquisition of wealth. In some regions the lights lit during the festival are said to protect the family from Bali the ruler of the hells who reigns on earth during these three days and to give light to the Ancestors, thus releasing them from the clutches of Yama and enabling them to reach heaven. Families may also offer śrāddha at this time in the form of piṇḍas, clothes and foodstuffs given to brahmins, crows and representations of the deceased. Kārttikaidīpa, in which the lamps of Dīvalī are duplicated, and which is held at the next full moon after Dīvalī is also a popular festival. Other

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[10] According to Gode (p.205-216) the modern festival of Dīvalī first makes its appearance in Purāṇic literature, where it was known as Sukhasuptikā.

annual festivals for the Ancestors may take place but these vary considerably from region to region.

New moon days are particularly associated with the Ancestors by most Hindus. According to orthodox tradition śrāddha should be performed on the day because the moon has come to earth so the departed are without Soma for the day and must be provided with sustenance by the living (Ved.6d). In practice not all brahmins actually perform śrāddha at the new moon, but they may offer a libation to the Ancestors of three ascending generations in addition to the one normally given to them in the daily tarpaṇa ritual. Many Hindus take only one meal on this day and refrain from washing clothes and sewing, the last because it is believed this will sew up the throats of the Ancestors.

High castes and brahmins may also make daily libations to the Ancestors, known as tarpaṇa (satisfaction). These are made in conjunction with libations to the gods and the Ṛṣis (seers of the Vedic hymns, who occupy a class separate from gods and men). The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[11] offer tarpaṇa to the gods first, with the performer facing east or north east with his sacred thread in the auspicious direction and pouring water over the tips of his fingers, which are held vertically. The performer next offers water to the Ṛṣis, facing west, with his sacred thread suspended like a necklace and his fingers held horizontally with the little finger at the bottom. The performer then faces south, with his thread in the inauspicious direction and invokes his male

[11] Stevenson p.229-230

Ancestors for three generations and pours water three times from the part of the right hand which lies between the base of the thumb and the base of the first finger. He offers identical libations for his female Ancestors of three generations and then makes libations for other dead relatives. In theory, he should offer tarpaṇa to all those relatives whose life he would have wished to make happy and it is believed that the libations can be transformed by them into anything they need. If tarpaṇa is not offered, it is thought that the Ancestors will drink the blood of the performer and condemn him to childlessness.

As might be expected, the higher the caste, the more frequent are the formal rituals which should be performed for Ancestors. At the tribal and low caste level, formal rituals are confined to annual festivals; middle castes have annual festivals, monthly observances and possibly anniversary ceremonies; brahmins and high castes offer daily libations, hold monthly observances and celebrate individual anniversaries as well as the annual festivals.

Among the tribes and outcastes there is a tendency to believe that the Ancestors dwell within the community alongside the living, while among caste Hindus and brahmins it seems to be thought that the Ancestors live elsewhere and only enter the world of the living at certain times of the year and when summoned by ritual. Tribes and outcastes live constantly in the presence of the Ancestors as represented by stones and pots while

caste Hindus only encounter them in the context of rituals. Thus, among the tribes the Ancestor pot remains in position all year round while among caste Hindus the kalaśa representing the Ancestors is set up only for the purpose of śrāddhas.

As in the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam (Eth.5c), the form of the high caste and brahminic tarpaṇa ritual demonstrates the position of the Ancestors relative to that of other divine beings: the gods are transcendent and auspicious beings and the performer wears his thread in the auspicious direction and pours water with his hand in the auspicious position; the Ṛṣis are human but removed by their ascetic purity from saṃsāra (the cycle of rebirth) so the performer wears the sacred thread in the intermediate position and pours water in the intermediate way; the Ancestors are human and still bound by saṃsāra so the performer wears his thread in the inauspicious direction and pours water using the inauspicious hand position. Although the Ancestors share the tarpaṇa ritual with the gods and Ṛṣis, the gap between them and the other divine beings is still enormous, so that only low grade brahmins (though not as low grade as those who represent ghosts) will represent them in śrāddhas outside the immediate family (Eth.6c). Although in theory as divine beings they can bring good fortune to the family as well as bad, and during the course of a śrāddha ceremony are usually asked to grant long life, sons and wealth to their relatives, in practice people are more concerned with the harm they do than the benefits they bring to the family. When the tribes apply to their Ancestors in times of misfortune,

it tends to be because the departed are believed to be responsible for the calamities rather than that the Ancestors protect the community from the external forces of evil; while Hindus tend to ascribe their good fortune to the gods and misfortune to the Ancestors. Although in ritual Ancestors are treated as divine, in people's minds they are not far removed from ghosts and evil spirits. Thus, at Dīvalī, when the Lord of the hells rules and evil spirits and witches are abroad, people also light lamps and perform śrāddhas for their Ancestors.

6e. Ceremonies For Ancestors On Special Occasions And In Special Circumstances.

All groups perform a rite for the Ancestors on the occasion of a marriage and the birth of a child. Among the tribes, outcastes and low castes, this ceremony takes the form of caste feasts, animal sacrifices and the offering of foodstuffs to Ancestor images. Among other caste Hindus and brahmins, marriages, births and other auspicious rites include a ceremony for the Ancestors known variously as the vṛddhi or ābhyudayika śrāddha (obsequies for the increase of prosperity) or the nandī or nāndīmukha śrāddha (obsequies for smiling Ancestors). The forms employed are the same as in other śrāddhas - the offering of foodstuffs and piṇḍas, caste feasts and the setting up of kalaśas etc. - but in other respects this rite is significantly different from normal śrāddhas: there is no stigma attached to its performance and brahmins of the highest standing are quite happy to take part; if piṇḍas of wheat flour and rice are

normally used, they are replaced with festive balls of raisins and sweets; sesame seeds are replaced with barley (normally offered to the gods); yellow and white powders (the colours of death, mourning and asceticism) are replaced with red (the colour of marriage and the gods); the sacred thread is worn in the auspicious direction and offerings are made with the palms facing down (as in offerings to the gods) rather than upwards. According to the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[12], this ceremony prevents sutaka (pollution) falling on the house should a distant relative die during the auspicious ceremony, though it does not prevent pollution falling on the house should a near relative die, in which case the ceremony has to be postponed. Other communities, however, say that the vṛddhi śrāddha is, as the name implies, performed to bring wealth, health and sons to the family, and is thought to be the only time when the Ancestors are truly content and need not be feared.

Special Ancestor feeding rites are held by many tribes when some calamity has overtaken the community. Occasionally the Ancestors are appealed to for protection from the evil which has befallen the tribe, but on the whole it is believed that the Ancestors themselves are the authors of the calamity because they have been offended by conduct of the members of the community and the feeding ceremony is thought to propitiate them.

Among the Hindus it is commonly thought that if a man marries again, his second wife is likely to be tormented by the

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[12] Stevenson p.62-3

spirit of the first. Thus, a second wife tends to make regular offerings to the first wife, particularly if she becomes ill or is troubled with misfortune. If the community uses a kalaśa to represent the Ancestors, she will set up a kalaśa specifically in the first wife's name, worship it and offer foodstuffs and a new cloth which she afterwards wears. In many communities a second wife will not wear a new article of clothing or jewellery without first ceremonially offering it to the dead wife. A second wife may also offer foodstuffs, clothing and jewellery to brahmins and their wives in the name of her predecessor. In some communities the second wife propitiates the first by wearing an image of her or a tali (marriage thread of South India) consecrated in her name.

Although Hindus pay lip service to the benevolent aspect of the Ancestors in their normal śrāddhas, in the circumstances of every day life the Fathers tend to be regarded as at best neutral and at worst malevolent and only on highly auspicious occasions are people really confident of their goodwill. The difference of attitude towards the Ancestors in these circumstances is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the ritual details of the standard śrāddha are altered so that the normally inauspicious Fathers are treated in the same way as the auspicious gods. It would thus appear that although the theoretical position is that the living can gain good fortune from the Ancestors simply by performing the śrāddha rites diligently, the benevolence of the Fathers is in

fact born of association with auspicious events rather than an inherent quality to which their descendants have access at all times.

Although a wife who dies before her husband is considered to be the most fortunate of beings and all other women desire to emulate her, nevertheless should her husband marry again she is greatly feared by the second wife and in people's minds is likely to behave as vindictively as any bhūta towards her successor. The bond of marriage cannot be broken by death either for a man or a woman and even when it is socially and religiously acceptable it is nevertheless fraught with danger because an Ancestor still has the emotions of one subject to saṃsāra and a dead wife is inevitably extremely jealous of her living successor. Thus the second spouse must behave as a junior wife, and wear only clothes and articles which have first symbolically belonged to her predecessor.

6f. The Gayā Śrāddha.

Many Hindus believe that the anniversary ceremonies are only a substitute for the Gayā śrāddha. This śrāddha consists of a pilgrimage to Gayā, where the performer visits up to forty-five vedis (sacred sites) at which he makes offerings to his Ancestors. Even for the poor people who visit just one or two sites a Gaya pilgrimage is expensive; in addition to the travelling costs the pilgrim is constantly importuned for alms by religious mendicants and he also has to give gifts to the priests who conduct him round the sites and perform the ceremonies for

him. When a pilgrim completes his offering at each site, the brahman who attends him binds his thumbs with a garland and says that he will fine him on account of the Ancestors. When the fine is paid, the brahmin unties the garland and declares that the ceremonies have been duly performed; only after this declaration has been made are the preceding ceremonies believed to take effect. It is not unknown for the brahman to keep the pilgrim tied up while he helps himself to what he considers to be an appropriate sum from his victim, although by law the contributions are supposed to be voluntary. According to popular belief, when the Gayā śrāddha is performed, the Ancestors obtain admission into Viṣṇu's heaven while their descendants acquire personal merit and absolution from some of the deadliest sins in the Hindu code. Once a man has performed the Gayā śrāddha for an Ancestor he no longer has to perform an anniversary rite for him.

The Gayā śrāddha poses certain problems when viewed in the context of funeral ritual as a whole. Most Hindus appear to believe that transfer to the status of Ancestor is virtually synonymous with entry into heaven and these goals are either achieved through one ritual or through two closely connected ceremonies held at the end of the mourning rites. At the same time they seem to believe that the deceased only enters heaven after the performance of the Gayā śrāddha. The anniversary rituals are said to act as substitutes for this ceremony, yet they have to be repeated every year whilst the Gayā śrāddha need

only be performed once. This confusing picture can be resolved if, as it appears in the Garuḍa Purāṇic material (G.P.6f), Viṣṇu's heaven is an equivalent of Brahma-loka, the world reached by those who have achieved final release. Once the Gayā _śrāddha_ has been performed dead relatives are treated in the same way as ascetics; further _śrāddha_ rites no longer have to be performed because, like ascetics, they have achieved release and are no longer subject to the saṃsāric needs of Ancestors.

Section 7. Untimely Death.

7a. Infant Death.

In all groups the funeral rites for an infant death differ from those of an adult. In the earlier ethnographic material those communities which normally cremate, as a rule bury their dead infants. Several high caste communities such as the Nambutiri brahmins, contain a few members who object to this practice and prefer to cremate their infants, but such cremations are performed without the full adult rites. According to Bayly[1], the Western concept that all death is the result of some disease has caused an erosion of the distinction between natural and untimely death and has meant that in recent times even small children have started to be cremated in the towns. In low caste and tribal communities where burial is normal, infants are usually buried as well, but they are interred close to or in the house of the bereaved family rather than in the adult burial ground. According to the Koyin (tribal) of South India[2], a child dying within a month of its birth is buried close to the house so that the rain dropping from the eaves may fall on the grave and thereby cause the parents to conceive another child. Some Chamars (outcastes) of the Central Provinces[3] proffer a similar explanation for their practice of burying infants below the doorway or the courtyard of the house of the bereaved family but

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[1] p.183-4

[2] Thurston v.IV p.52

[3] Russell v.II p.413

other members of the community say it is to prevent a tonhi (witch) from getting hold of the body of the child and rousing its spirit to life to do her bidding. The Korwa (tribal) of the Central Provinces[4] sometimes bury their infants under the shade of a banyan tree rather than in the house, saying that the banyan tree lives longest of all trees and is evergreen and a child buried in its shade will live out its proper span in the next birth. According to the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[5], infant death is the result of malignant karma which the child accumulated during past lives of wickedness. The high castes and brahmins do not perform adult śrāddhas for infants but they may feed children or make an offering of milk and/or foodstuffs at some time during the ten days after death. Lower castes and tribes rarely perform any feeding rituals for dead infants. It is generally believed that there is no need to give offerings to the spirits of dead children because they have not lived long enough to accumulate any karma and thus there is no fear of being troubled by their ghosts. None of the groups performs a ceremony of transfer to the state of Ancestor for an infant death, though the dead children are remembered on the thirteenth day of the Ancestor fortnight (Eth.6c,d). Among the higher castes and brahmins primary pollution usually lasts from two to three days rather than the ten to twelve days of an adult funeral and affects only the

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[4] Russell v.III p.574-5

[5] Stevenson p.201-2

closest relatives while among the lower castes and tribes little or no pollution is observed for infant deaths.

The age at which a child ceases to become an infant for the purposes of funeral ceremonies varies considerably according to caste and geographical area. Among the three twice-born varṇas a boy may pass from infancy either after the tonsure ceremony performed when he is three to five years old or after his investiture with the sacred thread, which traditionally takes place at eight years old for a brahmin, eleven for a kṣatriya and twelve for a vaiśya. Girls make the transition from infancy at exactly the same time as boys although they do not go through the ceremonies of tonsure and investiture with the sacred thread.

Among the brahmins and caste Hindus of the older ethnographic accounts it would appear that a child must live long enough for it to undergo a major saṃskāra (rite of passage) in order for it to receive cremation. In Hindu thought a person is someone who exists in both the physical and the religious sphere; physical birth alone is not sufficient, for a person must also be 'born' through religious ritual in order to be a complete person. A child which dies before undergoing the ritual processing which admits it into religious life and hence into full existence as a human being is therefore not processed at death in the same way as a proper person. There can be no last sacrifice on the funeral pyre for one who has not yet been 'born'. The practice of cremating only those children which have undergone a major

saṃskāra could also have an economic basis. Traditional cremation is an extremely expensive method of corpse disposal and in a culture with high infant mortality rates the practice of burning only those children which have reached the age at which the first major rites of passage are performed lessens the financial burden of their families.

It is not clear from the ethnographic accounts whether, as in the Garuḍa Purāṇic material (G.P.7a), there is an intermediate stage, after the transition from infancy has occurred, in which the child is cremated but treated as an infant in that adult śrāddha rites are replaced with offerings of milk and food to children. It seems likely that those members of the high castes who advocate the cremation of infants have been influenced by the powerful idea that cremation is the proper method of corpse disposal (Eth.2a) and having the financial means to do so cremate the corpses of children, differentiating the infant funeral ceremony from that of an adult by burning the body without mantras or any of the other ceremonies normally connected with cremation.

The popular reason given for the perfunctory feeding and commemorative rituals and the complete lack of a transfer ceremony for the child is that it has not lived long enough to accumulate any karma. Just as the treatment of a child's corpse expresses its status as a non-person in ritual terms so this explanation expresses the same view in karmic terms. An infant is a non-person when viewed in ritual terms since it has not

undergone the ceremonial processing which admits it into religious life and hence into full existence as a human being and it is likewise a non-person when viewed in karmic terms for it is only through actions and the karma which results from them that a child can become a full human being. Since a child is not a full human person, infant death is not as polluting as the death of an adult, so the bereaved family observes a shorter period of impurity.

It is interesting that the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins explain infant death as being the result of malignant karma from past lives but do not seem to believe that this affects the family of the dead child. It would appear that this karmic explanation of the reason for infant death has little part to play in the way a child's funeral is conducted; the family deals only with the consequences of the death of a non-person, not with the death of a wicked person whose bad karma condemned them to an infant death.

A non-person is completely without resistance to possession and represents an ideal vehicle for the practice of witchcraft. The widespread fear of witches among the low castes and tribes undoubtedly plays a part in the practice of burying children within the confines of the house where they cannot be exhumed for nefarious purposes. The reason most frequently given for this practice, however, is that it will cause the parents to have another child. In a cyclical universe where life is a limited resource a child which never becomes a proper person is reborn far more quickly than an adult person who must go through being a

ghost and an Ancestor before returning to earth. Although the participants appear to have no clear idea about the mechanism by which a child buried in the house causes parents to conceive, it is possible that this practice is a way of hastening the process of rebirth and ensuring that the child is reborn in the same family.

7b. Death Of An Unmarried Man Or Woman.

The two great goals shared by all groups throughout India are those of marriage and having a son. The Hindus and tribes generally believe that those who die with either of these desires unfulfilled become dangerous ghosts unless special measures are taken. Those who die unmarried also die without children; for most communities funeral ceremonies and post-funerary offerings for the unmarried dead are exactly the same as those for married people who have died sonless (Eth.7c), but with the addition of a 'marriage' ceremony, in which the corpse is 'married' to a plant or object. Among the Idaiyan (caste Hindus) of South India[6] when an adult unmarried male or female dies, a human figure is made out of holy grass, and some of the marriage rites are performed to 'marry' it to the corpse. Among the Pardhans of the Central Provinces[7] the priest performs the marriage ceremony with a cotton string of seven threads in seven knots which he lays on the corpse's chest and then breaks saying,"Now you are married,

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[6] Thurston v.I p.363

[7] Hivale p.185

do not bother us any more". In Poona[8] if a brahmin boy dies after he has received the sacred thread and before the sod munj (loosening of the munj grass) or, according to others, between investiture with the sacred thread and marriage there is at first no mourning. The father sits on the ground near the body and performs the puṇyāhavācanam (holy day blessing) and the nāndī śrāddha (śrāddha for the Ancestors with smiling faces). At the funeral ground the arka vivāha (sun marriage) is performed in which the corpse is 'married' to a twig of rui (Calatropis gigantea). The twig and the body are bathed and rubbed with turmeric. A yellow thread is passed round them and each is dressed in a piece of white cloth. After this 'marriage' has taken place the father becomes impure and mourning begins. The spirits of the unmarried dead are remembered by the Hindus on the thirteenth day of the Ancestor fortnight along with those of children who have died in infancy (Eth.7a).

The ghost of an unmarried man is more feared than the ghost of an unmarried woman and in some communities the 'marriage' ceremony is only performed for a bachelor. The Pardhaṇs (tribal) of the Central Provinces[9] believe that if an unmarried man dies he turns into a ghost called a rakṣa. This ghost is especially feared by women because it is supposed to come by night and have sexual intercourse with girls leaving them thin and exhausted.

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[8] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.561

[9] Hivale p.185

The 'marriage' at the funeral ceremony of an unmarried person seems to be interpreted by both high and low castes as an attempt to prevent the community from being troubled by the ghost of someone with unfulfilled desires. Among the higher castes and brahmins there may also be an important ritual reason for the 'marriage' ceremony, though this is never mentioned by the participants. Although the infant and the young person who has entered into the community through the performance of saṃskāras (rites of passage) are both unmarried, it is only the latter who has a 'marriage' ceremony performed at his funeral. It is not necessary to perform a 'marriage' ceremony or even a proper funeral for an infant because it is a non-person in ritual terms; but a child who has entered the religious community and is therefore a full human being must go through all the ritual stages of life if he or she is not to become a permanent ghost after death. Thus, in the case of the brahmin community of Poona, the corpse of an unmarried boy is not initially treated as a dead body but as a bridegroom; there is no mourning impurity and the boy's father performs the śrāddha used on auspicious occasions. Only after the body has received the saṃskāra of marriage can it be treated as a corpse and given the proper funeral rites.

7c. Death Without A Son.

The second great goal of life in Hindu culture after marriage (Eth.7b) is that of having a son, and those who die with this desire unfulfilled are believed to become dangerous ghosts.

As has been seen (Eth.1e), in most Hindu communities the dead person's son acts as chief mourner and the fervent desire for male offspring is closely connected with this role. Most Hindus desire a son in order that he may take on the role of chief mourner for them at death and support them in the world beyond by making offerings. In the absence of a son the funeral rites do not go unperformed; those for a man are usually executed by a close male relative and those for a woman are usually performed by her husband, if he survives her, and if not then by some close male relation.

The ethnographic accounts do not provide any detailed descriptions of the funeral rites used for the sonless dead but several sources do mention, however, that among the caste Hindus, outcastes and tribes a different method of corpse disposal is often used; communities which normally cremate their dead bury their sonless dead and vice versa.

In the Punjab and North West Provinces those who die without male issue are known as gyals (sonless dead)[10], ant parets (ghosts of men who are the last of their line)[11] or, more euphemistically, pitas (fathers)[12]; they are thought to seek the lives of the young sons of others. Almost every village in North India has small platforms dedicated to the men who have died without a son. At these platforms lamps are lit, milk and Ganges

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[10] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.202

[11] Hershman p.171

[12] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.199

water are offered and brahmins fed on their behalf[13]. A careful mother will also dedicate a rupee to them and hang it around her child's neck until it grows up[14]. The sonless dead are also supposed to torment their relatives and for this reason in Chamba[15] surviving relations wear as an amulet *jantra* (a small case of silver or copper containing a scroll supplied by a brahmin) or an *autar* (a necklet with a human figure cut on it which must be propitiated by a goat sacrifice). Among the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[16] the sonless dead are sometimes thought to be responsible for causing childlessness among their relatives, in which case a bull marriage, a *nārāyaṇa bali* or a *tripiṇḍī* may be performed for them (Eth. 6e) on behalf of the childless couple.

A woman who dies without a son becomes a *chuṛel*[17]. *Chuṛels* are popularly believed to hover about tombstones with beautiful faces but inverted feet and seek to seduce travellers and men returning from the fields at nightfall. The man who has intercourse with a *chuṛel* is thought to have the life drained from him and rarely survives the encounter. Although several ethnographic accounts refer to measures taken to propitiate and control the spirits of male Ancestors who have died without sons, none of them record any propitiatory measures taken against

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[13] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.202

[14] *ibid.*

[15] Ibbetson and Maclagen p.200

[16] Stevenson p.124-127

[17] Hershman p.171; Kakar p.56

churels of women who have died without male issue, despite the fear in which these malign female spirits are held.

The basic importance of having a son is that men feel they live on in their male offspring. Although the idea that someone gains merit through becoming the chief mourner where there is no son, acts as a powerful incentive to relatives and even outsiders, where there are no relations, to ensure that the bodies of the sonless dead receive the correct processing, there can be no proper afterlife for one who does not live on in this world through his sons.

It is interesting that in the case of someone dying unmarried, the unfulfilled wish of marriage is fulfilled by a corpse 'marriage' but in the case of a person dying without a son there is no attempt to deal with the situation in similar terms by making the deceased the father or mother of a son in the ritual sphere if not in the physical world. Both in the case of the unmarried dead (Eth.7b) and the sonless dead, while measures are taken to control and placate the male ghosts, little or nothing appears to be done about female ghosts, though churels are just as malign and dangerous as their male counterparts. This difference in treatment may be due to the fact that although any woman dying with grossly unsatisfied desires may become a churel, the condition is primarily associated with women who have died while pregnant or in childbirth. Rituals for controlling and placating churels, therefore, are usually an integral part of the

funeral rites for a woman who has died in pregnancy or childbirth. Ghosts of unmarried and barren women seem to occupy an ambiguous position; in theory they become churels but in practice do not appear to be treated as such, the preventative and controlling measures appropriate to such a malign ghost being confined to women who have died while pregnant or in childbirth.

7d. Women Dying In Childbirth Or Pregnancy.

It is commonly thought that women who die during pregnancy or childbirth turn into churels (Eth.7c) because they have died with their maternal desires unfulfilled. There seems to be no distinction made between those dying with their first child and those dying in a subsequent pregnancy or childbirth. According to brahminical tradition anyone dying with such a primal desire unfulfilled must be subject to particularly bad karma resulting from atrocious deeds in past lives.

Brahmins regard the body of a woman who has died during pregnancy or in childbirth as a ritually impure object; it is not dressed in ceremonially pure clothing at the house as is normal (Eth.1d), and among the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[18] the circumambulation of the corpse in the auspicious direction (Eth.1d) is omitted because as a ritually impure object it cannot represent the goddess Lakṣmī. The body is disposed of by the same method as that used for the corpses of normal deaths, but the cremation is either performed completely without ceremonies or, if the family object to this takes place in the normal fashion after the body

[18] Stevenson p.151

has gone through a series of elaborate purification ceremonies. In Poona[19], for instance, the brahmins purify the body by covering it from head to foot in dough. The chief mourner then scoops water onto it from a winnowing fan one hundred and eight times to wash off the dough. He then pours ashes and water; cow dung and water; darbha grass and water; and finally pañcagavya and water over the body. The corpse is then dressed in clean clothes. Only after this is the corpse regarded as fit for burning. If the body is burnt without ceremonies, the bones are burnt again, this time with the full funeral rites, when they are collected at the sañcayana ceremony.

Among the caste Hindus, outcastes and tribes a different method of corpse disposal is often used, those communities which normally cremate their dead burying the bodies of pregnant women and those dying in childbirth and vice versa.

In a few communities, if the woman dies with an advanced foetus still inside her, it is extracted during the ceremonies associated with the disposal of the corpse. Among the brahmins of Poona[20] this operation is carried out by the woman's husband or son, who cuts open her left side below the navel. If the child is alive it is taken home and if dead it is buried. The belly of the woman is then filled with curds and butter and burnt as normal. The experience is extremely harrowing and after the chief mourner has touched the body with the knife the operation is often

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[19] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.561-2

[20] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.562

carried out by a less closely related member of the family. According to the Mādigas (outcastes) of Mysore[21], if the foetus is removed a serious calamity will surely follow, while the brahmins of Poona[22] believe that the chief mourner who burns a mother with a child commits murder and therefore must undergo a series of purificatory rites.

Among the brahmins the series of śrāddha rites which normally accompany a funeral and effect the transfer of the deceased from the state of being a ghost to that of an Ancestor are thought to be ineffectual in the case of a woman dying in pregnancy or childbirth because the past sins which caused the untimely death prevent the ghost from receiving sustenance from the piṇḍa offerings. The normal śrāddha rites are therefore either preceded or entirely replaced by the nārāyaṇa bali, which is believed to be capable of wiping out the effects of the most heinous of sins. The brahmins of Sholāpur[23] perform the nārāyaṇa bali in the following way. The chief mourner purifies an area with cow dung and water and sets up a golden image of Nārāyaṇa (a form of Viṣṇu) which he bathes and offers turmeric, flowers, cakes and red powder. He worships it and prays that Nārāyaṇa may remove the sins of the dead person. He then sets up a golden image of Viṣṇu, a silver image of Brahmā, a copper image of Rudra, an iron image of Yama and a lead image of the preta

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[21] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.IV p.163

[22] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.562

[23] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XX p.522-3

(ghost). He calls upon the four deities and the deceased and worships them in the same way as he worshipped the Narayana image. He then performs the *prāyaścitta homa* or atonement sacrifice. He sets up the sacred fire saying that he has kindled the sacred fire in order that the sin attaching to certain kinds of death may be removed so that he or she may not wander among the living but may go to heaven easily. The kinds of death in question are; death on an unlucky day; in water; in pregnancy, childbirth or menstruation; on ground which was not prepared with cow dung sesame seed and *darbha* grass; or the death of a convert or atheist. The chief mourner puts cooked rice and sesame seed into the fire and then worships the family priest giving him a cow, money and presents. Finally he performs the *vaiṣṇavādi* and *pañcadaivata śrāddhas*. He sets out and worships eleven *piṇḍas* for Viṣṇu, Śiva, Yama, Soma, Havyavāhana (the gods' offering carrier), Kavyavāhana (the Ancestors' offering carrier), Mṛtyu (Death), Rudra, Puruṣa, the *preta* and Nārāyaṇa. He then sets out and worships five *piṇḍas* for Brahmā, Rudra, Yama and the *preta*. He finishes by worshipping the family priest again and giving him gifts of cows, gold, silver, iron, umbrellas and sesame.

Many caste Hindu, outcaste and tribal communities take measures during the funeral ceremony to control or placate the malign spirit of a woman dying in pregnancy or childbirth. In the Punjab and the North West Provinces[24], the earth on which such a woman died is sown with mustard seed, which is also sprinkled on

[24] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.206

the road by which the body is carried and on the grave if the body is buried. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[25] also use mustard seed, spreading it on the way during the funeral procession instead of the Ganges water or milk used during a normal funeral procession. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins offer no explanation for the practice but according to the communities of the Punjab and the North West Provinces[26], mustard blooms in the world of the dead and its scent keeps the *chuṛel* content; furthermore, when she rises at nightfall and seeks her home, she stops to gather up the mustard seed and is thus delayed until cock-crow when she must return to the funeral ground. The Pardhans (tribal) of the Central Provinces[27] place a reed conundrum above the grave similarly believing that its solving will keep the *chuṛel* busy and prevent her from returning home. When the priest employs this and other controlling measures at the grave he circumambulates it in the auspicious direction, the opposite direction to the circumambulations used at a normal funeral. Bonds and restraints placed on the corpse are also popular ways of controlling the spirit; the Kurmis (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[28] tie the corpse's hands with cotton thread at burial to prevent the woman's spirit rising and troubling the living while in the

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[25] Stevenson p.151

[26] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.206

[27] Hivale p.184

[28] Russell v.IV p.78

Punjab and the North West[29] the thumbs and the big toes are welded together with iron rings. Also in the Punjab[30] special round-headed nails are driven through the corpse's fingernails and feet and these are thought to skewer her spirit to the ground.

The Pardhans (tribal) of the Central Provinces[31] believe that the skull of a woman dying in pregnancy or childbirth is an effective remedy for cholera if, at the time of an outbreak, it is buried in the middle of the main path to the village and 'roused' by being offered a chicken sacrifice before being dug up again after fifteen days and carefully preserved for use at the next outbreak.

Several accounts of the brahminical communities mention that the body of a woman who dies during menstruation is treated in a similar fashion to the corpse of a woman dying in childbirth or during pregnancy; the body is regarded as impure until it either goes through a series of purification ceremonies at the funeral ground or is burnt twice, firstly without ceremony and secondly with full ceremonies at the sañcayana. As in the case of a woman dying in pregnancy or childbirth, the normal śrāddha rites are preceded or replaced by the nārāyaṇa bali.

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[29] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.206

[30] ibid.

[31] Hivale p.184-185

As has been seen, among the caste Hindus the corpse occupies an ambiguous position; it is both auspicious and inauspicious, polluting and at the same time extremely pure, a holy sacrifice to be consumed in the sacred fire. Women who die during menstruation, pregnancy or childbirth, however, seem to have lost this ambiguous status and their corpses are completely impure and wholly inauspicious. Brahmins seek to restore the balance between purity and impurity of the corpse either by bathing the body in purifying substances or by performing a double cremation, disposing of the body with ordinary fire and without mantras in order to purify the remains and then burning the bones with the full ceremonies. Among caste Hindus it is possible that the body of a woman dying in pregnancy or childbirth is buried rather than burned because it is thought to be too impure for offering on the funeral pyre. Burial as opposed to cremation marks the corpse as being not only wholly impure and therefore unfit for offering into fire but also wholly inauspicious, the physical remains of a malign ghost. Lower down the social scale, where ideas about the body as a sacrifice are less developed (Eth.1e,1f), it is this latter reason for the reversal of normal procedure which probably takes precedence. At the lowest levels of society, where burial is the norm and ideas about the body as sacrifice are absent, the bodies of pregnant women and those who have died in childbirth are burnt. Fire does not have the significance that it does among higher castes and

its use simply represents a reversal of normal procedure demonstrating the highly inauspicious nature of the corpse. When the Pardhan priest circumambulates the corpse in the clockwise direction a double reversal of ritual procedure can be seen. In normal rituals circumambulation is in the auspicious, clockwise direction. In funerals this direction is reversed to demonstrate the inauspicious nature of the occasion. In the case of an abnormal funeral it appears that the Pardhans change the anticlockwise direction to the clockwise direction so that what is normally the auspicious direction here demonstrates that the occasion is doubly inauspicious.

The accounts contain no explanations from the participants as to why the corpse of a woman dying during menstruation, pregnancy or childbirth loses its ambiguous status. The tension of the pure/impure corpse, however, is achieved by ensuring that a person dies in a state of ritual purity; thus, among caste Hindus and brahmins a dying person goes through various preparatory purificatory procedures (Eth.1a,1b) to ensure that the body is fit for processing after death. A woman dying during menstruation or childbirth dies in a state of pollution which cannot be removed by the normal purificatory procedures because, as with death pollution, there is a time factor involved in the impurity; rituals to end the pollution can only be performed after the correct number of days have elapsed after the onset of the impurity. Besides this physical impurity there is also a spiritual impurity because according to karmic theory untimely

death is the result of bad karma accumulated through evil deeds in past lives. The body of a woman who has died during menstruation, pregnancy or childbirth, is the corpse of a sinner and therefore impure.

The tension of the auspicious/inauspicious corpse is related to its purity/impurity; if the purity of the corpse makes it an auspicious sacrifice, the corpse which is totally impure must also be wholly inauspicious. The wholly inauspicious nature of the corpse is also related to the belief that the ghost of such a woman is malign and difficult to process. At caste, outcaste and tribal level this ghost is controlled and confined to the funeral ground by means of various exorcistic procedures, whereas the brahmins seek to remove the bad karma which impedes its proper processing. These two methods of dealing with the spirit are possibly due to slightly different attitudes towards the ghost. Caste hindus, outcastes and tribes seem to see the ghost primarily as the spirit of someone who has died with grossly unsatisfied desires. Since those desires cannot be fulfilled, the ghost cannot be processed and can only be controlled. The brahmins, on the other hand, tend to interpret the unfulfilled desires as symptoms of bad karma, which with correct ritual procedure can be removed, allowing the ghost to be properly processed. The case of the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins, who strew the way with mustard seed although offering no explanation for the rite, suggests that although the brahminical emphasis is primarily on

dealing with the bad karma and processing the ghost some brahmin communities may also employ exorcistic procedures.

7e. Death From Leprosy, Cholera or Smallpox.

Endemic diseases are popularly believed to be caused by the unfriendly influence of some planet, god, goddess or spirit while epidemic diseases are thought to be caused by the anger of some goddess although factors such as diet and environment are also believed to have an influence[32]. In the older ethnographic accounts the funeral rites of all groups for someone dying of cholera, leprosy or any disease characterized by skin eruptions such as smallpox, differ from those normally performed for a married adult. As with other instances of untimely death (Eth.7a,b,c) the difference often takes the form of an alternative method of corpse disposal; burial or disposal in a canal or river replacing cremation and cremation replacing burial. Victims may also have a nārāyaṇa bali performed for them[33]. According to traditional belief smallpox is caused by Sītalā or Mātā Devi, the goddess of smallpox and other skin diseases while cholera epidemics are caused by the anger of the goddess Kālī[34]. According to Punjabi Hindus[35] the bodies of those dying of smallpox must be disposed of in the Ganges or Jumna

[32] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt.I; Lewis 267f.

[33] Crooke v.I p.90

[34] Lewis p.269; Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt I p.368; Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.VI p.89; Stevenson p.361

[35] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.863

because cremation would displease the goddess and the infection would spread. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[36] similarly state that cremation would cause the infection to spread, but make no reference to the goddess. Despite the belief that cremation causes the infection to spread the Kathiawar brahmins[37] nevertheless often burn lepers and smallpox victims though orthodox members of the community strongly disapprove of this.

According to Bayly[38], as with infants (Eth.7a), the influence of the Western idea that all death is the result of some disease has caused an erosion of the distinction between natural and untimely death and in urban communities people who have died of rotting diseases, who would formerly have been buried are now commonly burnt. While the advent of vaccination and Western medical explanations have changed attitudes in the urban communities they have by no means eradicated the belief in rural communities that victims of contagious diseases have been possessed by the god or goddess popularly held to be responsible for that disease. When Lewis[39] interviewed the villagers of Rampur in New Delhi about the causes of various diseases, he found that traditional supernatural and mundane interpretations had in many cases been fused with rather than replaced by Western medical explanations.

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[36] Stevenson p.153

[37] ibid.

[38] P.183-4

[39] p.268-301

In those communities where victims of smallpox and leprosy and cholera are buried, such burials may be differentiated in some way from those of ascetics, who are also traditionally buried. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[40] bury ascetics in an upright position while they bury diseased corpses lying down. They explain the difference in posture by saying that the recumbent position is used for the diseased corpses because of the sins and the amount of evil karma such people have accumulated.

The ghosts of those dying of smallpox, leprosy or cholera tend to be feared. Among the Izhuvans (outcastes) of Cochin[41] the spirits of men or women who die of smallpox along with those who die in childbirth or commit suicide are believed to wreak vengeance on the living and cause misfortunes (preta bheda) to their families.

As in other cases of untimely death (Eth.7a,b,c,), the caste Hindus, outcastes and tribes practise a reversal of normal corpse disposal procedure. Although brahmins usually cremate adults, even in the case of an untimely death, when someone dies from leprosy or smallpox they too traditionally reverse their normal corpse disposal procedure. A possible reason for this reversal of normal procedure among the caste Hindus and brahmins is that the physical condition of a corpse dying from smallpox or leprosy is extremely poor and the traditional practice may arise from a

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[40] Stevenson p.153

[41] Iyer v.I p.320

feeling that no amount of ritual purification is able to compensate for the obvious physical shortcomings of such a corpse as a sacrificial offering. It seems likely that the reversal of normal corpse disposal procedures, as in the case of women dying in childbirth, expresses the impurity of the corpse among the higher castes while lower down the scale it represents its inauspiciousness. Interestingly, however, the Punjabi Hindus do not give this as their reason for reversing normal corpse disposal procedure; they say they do not cremate because the goddess who causes the disease will be angry. Possibly they believe the goddess will be angry because she inhabits the bodies of those she infects, in which case to cremate the body would be to burn her, but it seems more likely that for most participants this explanation is simply a superficial theistic justification for an established practice. It seems that the Punjabi Hindus have made a connection between the goddess as the cause of the disease and the way in which the corpse is treated. Given that their treatment of the body fits into the overall pattern of reversal of normal corpse disposal procedures, it seems likely that this represents a theistic reinterpretation of a practice which has its roots in ideas about the impurity and inauspiciousness of the corpse.

While the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins worship the goddess of smallpox[42], they also offer a karmic explanation for this type of death: it is seen as the result of the victim's accumulated bad

[42] Stevenson p.306-7

deeds in past lives, and for this reason they seek to differentiate the burial of such a person from that of an ascetic who through self-denial has cancelled his bad karma and achieved final release. It is not clear whether the two explanations are related and the participants see the goddess as an agent of karmic retribution, or whether they simultaneously operate two worlds of thought without ever making any connection between the two; one, a theistic model in which a man survives or perishes according to how he pleases the deities; the other, a karmic model in which an impersonal law of reward and retribution operates. As worship of the goddess of smallpox tends to be the province of the women while the disposal of the corpse is dealt with by the men in brahminical communities, it may be that the two explanations reflect a difference of opinion between men and women about how the world works.

As with the death of infants (Eth.7a), there is a tendency for the communities who cremate their dead to dispose of those dying from smallpox or leprosy in the same way although, according to tradition, they should be buried. Sentiment appears to overcome ritual considerations and fear of the ghost. The idea that cremation is the proper way to dispose of the corpse is so strong that families feel they are denying the dead person a proper funeral if they dispose of the corpse in any other way, despite the fact that their actions may anger the goddess of smallpox and cause the infection to spread and despite the fact that they face censure from orthodox members of the community.

7f. Violent Death And Suicide.

In all groups the funeral rites for someone dying a violent death or by suicide differ from those normally performed for a married adult. Among the caste Hindus and brahmins such people are popularly believed to have died as a result of their bad karma. The funeral for a person who dies by suicide or violence is known among the Hindus and also among some of the tribes as a nārāyaṇa bali and is thought to be an expiation ceremony (prāyaścitta). The nārāyaṇa bali may take several forms. Among the Sholāpur brahmins[43] the form is exactly the same as that used for a woman dying in childbirth (7c). In the case of the Kurmis (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[44], a person who has died by hanging, drowning or snake bite is burnt without any rites. A homa sacrifice is performed after the cremation in order that his soul may be saved. Other communities such as the Komatis (caste Hindus) of Mysore[45] and the Audhiyas (tribal) of North India[46] delay the funeral rites of someone who has died a violent death. The Audhiyas immediately consign the corpse to the Ganges and within a year a Mahābrāhman is paid to make a representation of the deceased in gram flour on which the regular rites are performed. The Audhiyas also perform this type of funeral for those dying of smallpox or leprosy.

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[43] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XX p.522-3

[44] Russell IV p.73

[45] Nanjundaya and Iyer v.III p.575

[46] Crooke v.I p.90

Outcastes and tribes commonly believe that a man who is killed by a tiger or snake becomes closely associated with the animal which killed him. The victim's ornaments are usually left with the corpse lest the spirit should return to look for them in the shape of a tiger. The Baigas (tribal)[47] of the Central Provinces and the Halbas (outcastes) also of the Central Provinces[48] believe that the victim, if not charmed, will accompany the tiger and incite him to further killings, rendering the animal secure from harm by his preternatural watchfulness. According to the Halbas the spirit is malevolent because the victim has died before his time and in his anger seeks others to share his fate.

When a man is killed by a tiger or a snake the outcastes and tribes normally hold a propitiation ceremony. This usually takes the form of sacrifices and offerings to the spirit of the deceased and often, in the case of death from a tiger, a priest or magician acts the part of a tiger which the relatives then pretend to drive away. Some communities deify the deceased and worship him in the form of a tiger image. Among the Panwār Rājputs (tribal) of the Central Provinces[49], members of the household will not afterwards kill a tiger because they believe it has become a member of the family.

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[47] Russell v.II p.84

[48] Russell v.III p.196

[49] Russell v.Iv p.347

Among the caste Hindus and brahmins the spirits of those who have died a violent death are remembered in the pitṛpakṣa on the ghāta caturdasī (violence fourteenth) when offerings are made to all those who have died in battle or otherwise through violence.

All Hindu groups and some of the tribes seem to replace the normal funeral rites with the nārāyaṇa bali when dealing with violent death and suicide but exactly what is meant by the nārāyaṇa bali seems to vary. Among the brahmins it seems to consist of a rite which replaces or precedes the śrāddhas normally offered in the ten days after the funeral and consists of the worship of images of Nārāyaṇa and other gods, offerings into the sacred fire and the worship of piṇḍas. Among the caste Hindus the nārāyaṇa bali also tends to replace the śrāddha rites normally held in the first ten days after death but it appears to be a rather simpler ceremony and may consist of only one of the major elements contained in the brahminical rite. Lower castes and tribes do not appear to have a nārāyaṇa bali in the brahminical sense of the term but instead seem to use this in the case of a death by violence or suicide as the name for the funeral ceremony itself. It seems that the nārāyaṇa bali is a brahminical rite of such importance that all groups know about it and profess to practice it, although it gradually loses its brahminical form as it goes down the caste system, until at the lowest level it survives in name only. Among the caste Hindus and tribes the nārāyaṇa bali may be used for other untimely deaths

besides those by violence and suicide, but the types of death for which it is used vary from community to community. This inconsistent picture may be due to the fact that while there is a strong tradition among all groups that death by suicide or violence is due to bad karma, in the case of other types of untimely death several other ideas tend to be of importance, such as that the person died because he angered the goddess of smallpox or that he has become a ghost because he died with an unfulfilled wish. Since the nārāyaṇa bali is generally thought to be an expiation ceremony it may not therefore be used in cases of untimely death where relatives are more concerned to deal with the deceased's unfulfilled wishes or to placate the goddess who caused the death.

7g. Death Under The Wrong Asterism.

Most Hindus believe that it is highly inauspicious for a person to die during the pañcaka (the lunar days under the five star configurations known as Dhaniṣṭāḥ, Śatabhiṣaj, Pūrve Proṣṭhapadāḥ, Uttara Proṣṭhapadāḥ and Revatī). It is generally thought that death during the pañcaka causes further deaths in a family. According to the brahmins and the Mehtars (outcastes) of the Central Provinces[50] it brings four more deaths in its wake, while according to the Punjabi Hindus[51] it causes as many deaths as there are remaining days in the pañcaka unless preventative measures are taken. The normal method of corpse disposal is

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[50] Russell v.II p.375 and v.IV p.221

[51] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.869-70

usual, but it is generally thought that the disposal of the corpse should be delayed until after the pañcaka if at all possible. If the funeral cannot be delayed the evil effects of holding a funeral under an inauspicious asterism are counteracted by disposing of a number of human images made of flour, darbha grass or precious metals along with the corpse. In the Punjab the number of images corresponds to the number of days remaining in the pañcaka but elsewhere four or five images tend to be used regardless how many days remain. This is believed to prevent further deaths in the family. In Madras the brahmins take the body out of a special opening made in the wall of the house rather than through the door and either abandon the whole dwelling for three to six months or, close up the room where the person died[52]. In the Simla hills the higher castes place five arrows on the threshold as they carry the corpse out. These arrows must be cut in two by a single sword stroke otherwise as many people will die as there are arrows remaining uncut and the swordsman himself will die within the year[53]. Some Punjabi Hindus[54] also perform a pañcaka śānti on the day of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam; in it they give away clothes, flowers and furniture and employ five brahmins to recite verses.

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[52] Dubois p.499

[53] Ibbetson and Maclagan p.870

[54] ibid. p.870-1

The participants offer no explanation as to why the pañcaka asterisms are inauspicious times in which to die and it is probable that as far as they are concerned the inauspicious qualities of the asterisms are inherent and therefore need no explanation. The pañcaka asterisms are probably considered inauspicious because they occupy the last five days of the lunar month and therefore coincide with the last days of the waning moon, a period of the month particularly associated with the Ancestors (Eth.6d). As the moon wanes the distinction between the world of the living and that of the dead becomes blurred and the barriers which separate the two realms are at their weakest. If a person dies during this time the force of death cannot be repelled and claims other victims before a proper distinction between the two worlds is restored as the moon waxes. In the case of death under an inauspicious asterism the family do not fear the deceased's ghost so much as death itself, acting as an impersonal force. The fact that the number of images used corresponds to the number of people who are expected to die suggests that the family seek to avert disaster by providing ritual substitutes for those who are destined to lose their lives, while the form of the pañcaka śānti and the fact that it is performed on the day of transfer ceremony suggests that it is used as a substitute sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, thus completing the mock funeral rites.

7h. Rites To Control And Pacify The Ghosts Of Those Who Have Died Untimely Deaths.

Among the Hindus it is commonly thought that if a wife fails to conceive or suffers a series of miscarriages that her misfortune is due either to the malign influence of the ghosts of relatives who have died untimely deaths or to the wrath of Ancestors who are dissatisfied with their memorial offerings. Some of the most popular remedies include nārāyaṇa bali (Eth.7d.), a bull marriage and release with associated piṇḍa offerings, which is believed to keep the Ancestors quiet in heaven for as many years as there are particles of dust adhering to the bull's horns whenever it digs in the earth and, śrāddha at Gayā or Kāśī.

Śrāddhas at Gayā and Kāśī are believed to have the power to transfer those who have become permanent ghosts to the status of Ancestor and thus prevent their families from being further troubled. Śrāddha at Gayā is thought to be so efficacious that it is commonly believed that the number of ghosts in India and the cases of possession by evil spirits have diminished since the railway and improved roads have given greater facilities for travel to Gayā[55]. Śrāddha rites for ghosts which have been troubling the living are particularly associated with the pitṛpakṣa when, as an educated Hindu of Gayā expressed it,

[55] O'Malley P.H. p.134

"Accounts should be settled with the bhūtas (ghosts, particularly permanent ghosts)"[56].

At Kāśī those who have died untimely deaths are liberated by rites at the Piśācamocana tank. Piśācamocana ('Where The Piśācas Are Liberated') was the piśāca who tried to enter Kāśī and was caught and decapitated by Bhairava and then allowed to remain on the outskirts of the city to liberate other piśācas[57]. Those who perform śrāddha there may add force to their rites by driving a spike into the trunk of an old tree in the temple courtyard thus assuring that the piśāca will be left behind.

The liberation of ghosts at Gayā is achieved through a series of rites centred around the two hills of Pretaśilā and Rāmaśilā. The long invocation called the Piṇḍa Kharaṣi, which is prescribed for the offering of piṇḍas at these places lists the recipients as those whose funeral rites have not been performed, those who have died through abortion, those who have been lame or maimed, those who have lived evil lives etc.. At the Pretaśilā offerings Yama is entreated not to beat or bruise the ghosts of the dead while at Rāmaśilā Yama's two servants are worshipped that they may not bark and bay at the unhappy ghosts[58]. The brahmin priests who officiate at these sites are known as Dhamis and are regarded as inferior to the Gayāwāls who officiate at the other Gayā sites.

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[56] O'Malley G.S. p.7

[57] Eck p.267-8

[58] O'Malley G.S. p.4

The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins also resort to the tripiṇḍī in the case of troublesome ghosts. This ceremony takes place on a new moon day and takes the form of worship of Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu represented by three piṇḍas and the offering of black seeds, silver and clothing (male or female depending on the sex of the Ancestor causing the trouble) to a number of brahmins, who are believed to represent the Ancestors. The tripiṇḍī may also be resorted to if the family has had consistent bad fortune. Brahmins are extremely reluctant to represent the Ancestors in such ceremonies and families wishing to perform the tripiṇḍī have great difficulty in finding the required number to take part in this rite.

Although in theory the inability to have children could be the result of bad karma, the most common remedies are concerned with pacifying ghosts and the Ancestors. In these circumstances the line between Ancestors and bhūtas (evil spirits of people who have died an untimely death or who have not had their funeral rites performed properly) is very blurred. As has been seen there is a strong connection between fertility and the Ancestors (Eth.5c, Eth.6b) and from this undoubtedly grew the idea that they are actively as well as passively involved in the production of offspring. Again, however, although the Ancestors are asked to give wealth, health and offspring by the performer of a śrāddha, in reality people tend to ascribe only a negative power to them; a child is a gift from the gods and infertility the result of the

wrath of the Fathers or the malign influence of a ghost. The reluctance of brahmins to represent Ancestors who are barely distinguishable from bhūtas (who are worse even than pretas) is understandable.

The nārāyaṇa bali appears to perform a dual function in that it is both a funeral rite capable of processing those in danger of becoming malign ghosts (Eth.7d,7e,7f) and also an exorcistic rite capable of ending the trouble caused by those who have already become permanent ghosts.

Śrāddha at Gayā appears to perform a two-fold function, achieving the status of Ancestors for those who are permanent ghosts and liberation for the dead who are already Ancestors (Eth.6f). It is interesting that although the Dhamis, priests at the hills of Pretaśilā and Rāmaśilā are brahmins they are viewed as distinctly inferior to the Gayāwāls who operate as priests at the rest of the sites on the Gayā pilgrimage. O'Malley suggests that the reason is historic and that the two hills were originally centres of aboriginal demonology which became absorbed into the Hindu cult along with their priests, the Dhamis, becoming sites which dealt with those ghosts which could not be processed by Vedic ritual[59]. Although the inferior status of the Dhamis may have historical roots, it seems likely that it is also due to the fact that these priests are primarily associated with exorcistic rites for inauspicious, dangerous and impure ghosts

[59] O'Malley G.S. p.6

while the Gayāwāls deal with the transfer of Ancestors to liberation.

Section 8. Widows.

In examining rituals concerning widows and attitudes towards them I shall confine myself to those aspects which pertain to the way in which death is regarded. I will not deal with sati, since this subject is too extensive to deal with in the context of the present discussion, and neither will I deal with the treatment of widows with regard to matters of inheritance.

8a. The Widow's Role In Her Husband's Funeral Ceremonies.

Among all groups if a man dies before his wife it is usual for her marriage necklace, bangles and other ornaments to be removed in a rite which takes place during the course of the funeral ceremonies. At the same time the widow will also remove the auspicious mark from her forehead, rub off the vermilion from her hair parting and put on widow's clothing, which in many communities consists simply of a cloth without a bodice in a colour which varies according to caste and geographical region. Among the higher castes and brahmins the widow is often dressed at the start of this ceremony as if for her wedding or a festival; she is adorned with pigments, flowers and fine garments, all of which she removes during the course of the rite. The widow's head may also be shaved during this ceremony, although this practice has died out in recent years and tends to be confined to old and extremely orthodox brahmin and high caste widows. The Liṅgāyat widow is allowed to wear a bodice and does not have her head shaved but her bangles are broken and her necklace is removed during the course of the funeral ceremonies.

Brahmin and high caste women usually have their ornaments removed by female relatives or widows of the same caste, but among the lower caste and outcastes they often have their ornaments removed by members of the barber caste, who are allowed to keep them. When the removal of the widow's ornaments is left to people outside the family she may be treated very badly and she often seeks to remove the ornaments herself before they are dragged from her by the barber or his wife.

Among the high castes and brahmins the broken ornaments and the widow's hair are often wrapped up in her bodice and placed by the corpse to be taken and burnt with it at the cremation ground. High caste and brahmin women do not usually go to the funeral ground but bathe in a tank or river at the time they estimate the body is being burned and then return home. In some communities the widow's ornaments are not broken until the final ceremonies, while some castes break a few bangles during the preparation and disposal of the corpse and then remove the rest of the ornaments during the final rites. Several outcaste and low caste communities have an equivalent rite for widowers in which they remove the man's toe ring and break his waist thread.

Among the higher castes and brahmins the breaking of the widow's bangles and marriage necklace are thought to signify her continuing fidelity to her dead husband and the end of her married life; as the Southern Vaiṣṇavite brahmin widow[1] removes her ornaments she addresses her dead husband with the words,"I

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[1] Dubois p.492

abandon all these to prove my love and devotion." Among the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins the wife of the dead man takes seven steps after the corpse before the funeral procession leaves the compound[2].

Higher caste and brahmin widows lose their respectability if they eat or drink on the day of the funeral and they are expected to sit in a corner of the house throughout the mourning period, only leaving after dark in order to relieve themselves. In all groups the widow has to observe the same restrictions as the chief mourner and in some tribes it is in fact the widow rather than the deceased's eldest son who takes on the role of principal mourner.

In many communities the wife of the dead man goes through her ceremonial transition to the state of widow during the preparation and disposal of the corpse but interestingly it is equally common for the rite of transfer to take place either immediately before or during the final rites of her husband. In a literal sense the wife becomes a widow at the moment of her husband's death, but at a more esoteric level she is still attached to an earthly being who haunts the places he inhabited when alive and is physically present in the 'lifestone' or in crows. It is only at the transfer to Ancestor that her husband truly leaves the world of the living for that of heaven or the Pitrloka. The performance of the ceremony of transfer to the

[2] Stevenson p.148

state of widow either at death or at the transition to Ancestor thus reflects these two levels of thought.

A wife's lucky necklace, bangles and ornaments, all signs of her married status, are removed at the time of her husband's death, symbolising the end of her married life, but although death brings married life to an end it does not end the marriage. In a society where an adult woman's sole identity tends to derive from her status as someone's wife, a widow is viewed not as a woman who has lost her husband but rather as the wife of a ghost or Ancestor, who possesses all the inauspicious qualities associated with her husband. The seven steps which the Kāṭhiāwār brahmin widow takes after the corpse thus, as Stevenson[3] points out, recall her marriage steps and confirm her faithfulness to her husband; as she started her married life she took seven steps and as she begins life as a widow married to a ghost she also takes seven steps. The author of the appendix to the Poona Gazetteer[4] goes as far as to suggest that the removal of the lucky marriage necklace and bracelets and the rubbing off of the auspicious mark from the forehead is to rid the widow of any spirit-scaring articles which might prevent the ghost or Ancestor from taking possession of his wife and thus arouse his anger. Though at a subsidiary level this is probably true, the primary significance of the removal of the widow's ornaments and auspicious marks is not so much to set her aside for her dead

[3] p.148

[4] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.540

husband as to identify her as a doubly inauspicious person, who is both responsible for her husband's death (Eth 8b.) and the wife of a ghost or Ancestor.

8b.Treatment Of Widows.

If a widow has her head shaved during her husband's funeral ceremony she keeps it tonsured for the rest of her life. Although this practice is dying out, young shaven brahmin widows are still to be found in South India. Those who still support widow tonsure claim that the scriptures demand it and that it ensures that the widow is unattractive to men; as an elderly Mādhva brahmin widow from Bangalore interviewed recently in India Today[5] explained, "According to the śāstras (scriptures) I had to do it. This way we can avoid the eyes of men. If even one strand of a widow's hair falls on the ground, her husband will go to hell." The Śrī-Vaiṣṇavite sect of the Tengalai have forbidden the shaving of widows for centuries and according to their scriptures widows who do shave their heads go to hell. In all other respects, however, their widows are treated the same as in other high caste communities.

A widow is regarded as both inauspicious and impure. She is inauspicious not only because she is believed to be married to a ghost or Ancestor but also because she is regarded as responsible for her husband's death in the first place. In most parts of India a widow is regarded as a ḍākinī (a woman who has eaten her husband). The death of her spouse is believed to have been caused

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[5] Nov.15 1987

by sins in her past life and some say that since widowhood is the most terrible of punishments it must be the result of the most terrible of crimes, adultery or murder. Thus in Gujerat a widow is often known as rāṇḍīraṇḍa (one who has been a prostitute). It is thought that the younger the widow the greater her crime must have been, so an older widow with sons is less castigated than a young childless widow.

A widow should not wear bangles, auspicious marks or brightly coloured clothes but some young educated widows are rebelling against this custom despite strong family opposition and the risk of being thought promiscuous.

It is commonly believed that the sight of a widow, particularly a shaven one, is a bad omen and the task in hand will not be fulfilled. Thus, on seeing a widow, many people will return home to pray or, if they are too far from home, sit down as if to break a journey before setting off on their day's business. Stevenson[6] records how a friend said that what cut her most deeply after she became a widow was that even an old friend would return to his house and make a new start if she was the first person he met.

Widows must keep a low profile during auspicious occasions and ceremonies, even among the educated and urban communities. India Today[7] records a recent incident which occurred in a rich and educated family from Tamil Nadu: the son was married to an

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[6] p.205-6

[7] Nov.15th. 1987

American and divorced and a daughter had broken off an engagement, and yet at a family wedding as the mother took the sari and jewellery to be blessed by those in attendance, she simply bypassed one relative who was a widow. It is also considered a bad omen if a widow's shadow falls on the sacred fire and although she is allowed to take part in pūjā arrangements she is not allowed to take part in the pūjā itself. She is not permitted to string flower garlands though she is allowed to thread garlands of tulasī (sacred basil), which is considered to be a disinfectant and does not pass on the pollution of a contaminated person. Among brahmins of the Central Provinces[8], a widow is forbidden to cook food because it is believed that while doing so she will remember her husband and the food will become like a corpse, offending the gods with its odour.

A widow is regarded as a mailagī (dirty person) until through years of self-denial and prayer she becomes pure. An orthodox high caste or brahmin widow is expected to subsist on one meal a day taken before noon and to keep every religious fast. In cases where the widow is head of the household, the dietary restrictions represent no great hardship and her one meal a day may be quite substantial. If the widow is young, however, and lives with her husband's family they may systematically starve her. Stevenson[9] was told by one widow that she would never

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[8] Russell v.II p.369

[9] p.205

forget how as a hungry child-widow she once took an extra handful of rice and was asked in a stinging tone by her mother-in-law for what new man she was fattening up her body. As well as observing dietary restrictions the widow is expected to sleep on the floor rather than a cot or a mattress for the rest of her life. Although a brahmin widow has a lower status than a married woman, it does not necessarily mean that she is neglected or condemned, however, and in many households she has a niche in the family, helping to look after the children and often acting as midwife.

According to Kane[10] there is no express Vedic authority for the tonsure of widows; neither the Gṛhya- nor the Dharma-sūtras refer to it and it is not mentioned in the important Smṛtis like those of Manu and Yajñavalkya. Some of the Smṛti texts refer to one shaving on the husband's death but there is no Smṛti passage describing the continual shaving of widows. Only the Skanda Purāṇa[11] prescribes the continual tonsure of widows, "The tying up into a braid of the hair by the widow leads to the bondage of the husband; therefore a widow should always shave her head." It appears that the practice was gradually evolved after the tenth or eleventh century. Kane suggests that as widows were equated with ascetics for several injunctions and as the latter shaved themselves, widows were gradually required to do so. He believes that the practice of tonsuring Buddhist and Jain nuns may also

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[10] v.II pt.1 p.592

[11] Kāśīkhaṇḍa 4.74

have had an influence on the institution of the tonsure of widows and suggests that the desire to keep widows chaste may have been another factor involved. As has been seen (Eth.8a), in theory marriage does not end at death and among the higher castes and brahmins it is expected that a wife remain faithful to her husband even after he has died. In a traditional society where sexually experienced women are either married or prostitutes, young widows are in a particularly difficult position. In theory a widow is still a married woman but in practice she has no husband and as such is like a prostitute. Furthermore according to karmic theory her position is due to past lives of immorality or crime. In a social system where a bride lives with her husband's family, although the widow is in theory still married, as far as her husband's male relations are concerned she is a sexually available woman for whom they have little respect on account of her karmic history. Continual fasting, shaving the head and the abandonment of ornaments, pigments and bright clothes render a widow sexually unattractive, protecting her husband's family from the charges that they are harbouring a prostitute and discouraging the male members of the family or outsiders from entering into sexual relations with her. The ascetic life is also the only means by which a woman is thought able to rid herself of the pollution caused by the sins in her past lives which brought the terrible punishment of widowhood upon her. It is interesting that from the point of view of the brahmins of the Central Provinces, the widow's impurity with

regard to food results from her connection with her husband as a corpse. Although in theory she is married to an Ancestor who is inauspicious but not impure, at another level she is thought of as being married to a carcass, so her pollution is not only the result of her past sins which killed her husband but also the consequence of her marriage to a corpse.

In the case of the Tengalai Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas, the fact that their widows have to observe all other ascetic restrictions apart from shaving their heads suggests that the ban on shaving serves to differentiate them from other and does not reflect a different attitude towards widows.

8c. Remarriage Of Widows.

Among the high castes and brahmins widowers are allowed to remarry but widow remarriage is regarded as even more disgraceful than leaving one's husband for another man and the penalty for it is complete and irrevocable loss of caste. According to the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[12] a widow cannot remarry because a gift can only be made once and as the bride was given to the bridegroom at her wedding she can never be given a second time to anybody else. Educated high caste widows, however, are trying to gain acceptance for widow remarriage among their communities. Although these campaigners initially faced fierce opposition, attitudes towards widow remarriage are slowly beginning to change among the educated classes. Among lower castes, outcastes, tribes and some agricultural middle castes widow remarriage is commonly

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[12] Stevenson p.206

practised. The difference in attitude towards remarriage in these groups can be seen in the Kurmi[13] (caste Hindus of the Central Provinces) rendition of the Mewari proverb which among the castes who do not allow widow remarriage runs,"When clouds have the colour of a partridge it is sure to rain and when a widow wears eye black (one of the symbols of a married woman), she is sure to bring destruction on the household." Their version runs,"If clouds are like partridge feathers it will rain and if a widow puts on eye black she will marry again; these things are certain." Widow remarriage tends to be abandoned, however, if the community wishes to acquire a higher status and rise in the caste system.

In some of the communities which practise remarriage the widow is expected to marry her husband's younger brother, even if he is already married, in which case the widow becomes his second wife. She is forbidden to marry her husband's elder brother because he is potentially the head of the family and so his connection with his younger brother's wife is a latent father-daughter relationship and therefore falls within the prohibited degrees of marriage. In some communities only widowers are allowed to marry widows; in others, if a bachelor wishes to marry a widow he must first be 'married' to some object or sacred plant with the full ceremonies. If the plant later dies or the object is lost or broken, the man must perform the same funeral ceremonies for it as he would for a wife. This custom is

[13] Russell v.IV p.67

generally said to be practised because marriage to a widow is not a proper marriage; as the Dhanwārs (tribal) of the Central Provinces[14] put it,"A woman cannot be anointed twice with the marriage oil, as a wooden cooking vessel cannot be put twice in the fire". The Halbas (caste Hindus) of the Central Provinces[15] say that if a bachelor marries a widow without going through the marriage ceremony with an unmarried girl or a spear he is likely to become an evil spirit after death.

If a widow marries her husband's brother then no bride price is paid but if she marries an outsider her price is normally half of the sum paid for an unmarried girl. Among the Santals (tribal) of Bihar[16] this is said to be because after death a widow will rejoin her first husband so her second spouse will enjoy her only in this life. Among some agricultural castes, however, widows may actually command higher bride prices than young girls, as it is thought that as mature women they are immediately able to perform the duties of a wife and are more capable and productive fieldworkers.

In most communities, including those where a widow's economic value is high, widow remarriage is regarded as an inauspicious event. Among the Naikdas (tribal) of Gujerat[17], for instance, widow marriage must be performed at night, otherwise,

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[14] Russell v.II p.494

[15] Russell v.III p.194

[16] Bihār and Orissa Disrict Gazetteers: Sambalpur p.165

[17] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.IX pt.I p.327

it is believed, the village will burn down. In most communities where widow remarriage is allowed married women are forbidden to attend the ceremony. Among the Ramoshis (tribal) of Poona[18] it is considered unlucky for a married woman even to hear the wedding service of a widow and when such a ceremony takes place the surrounding houses are deserted. Among the Kolis (tribal) of Ahmadnagar[19] a widow is unlucky for three days after her marriage and must take care that no married woman sees her during this time.

In several communities the second marriage ceremony includes rites to exorcise the spirit of the first husband to prevent him from troubling the second. Among the Barai (tribal) of the Central Provinces[20], for instance, the second husband offers a betel nut and leaf at the local shrine. The nut is thought to represent the spirit of the dead husband and is subsequently placed on a plank from which it is kicked off by the new bridegroom and then buried to lay the spirit. Among the Mahār (outcastes) of the Central Provinces[21], when a remarried widow proceeds to her new husband's house, her old clothes, necklace and bangles are thrown into a river or stream and she is given new ones to wear. As the old clothes are thrown away an exorcist

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[18] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVIII pt.I p.423

[19] Gaz.Bom.Pres. v.XVII p.206

[20] Russell v.II p.195

[21] Russell v.IV p.135

mutters spells over them in order to lay the spirit of the first husband.

Among the Kāpus (caste Hindus) of South India[22] a remarried widow can wear no signs of marriage, such as the tali or bangles, but among other communities it is more usual for a remarried widow to wear some or all of the symbols commonly used to indicate a married woman. Although remarried widows are allowed to wear the auspicious symbols of marriage and do not have to observe the ascetic practices expected of widows they are not allowed to take part in any auspicious ceremonies.

Children of a woman's first marriage are usually kept by her dead husband's family. Children of the second marriage are treated as legitimate and have claim to their father's property when he dies but there is a certain social stigma attached to them and they are often only able to marry the offspring of other remarried widows.

Although the remarriage of widows is one of the points on which Basava, founder of the sect, insisted, many Liṅgāyats, particularly those of high social standing, choose to disregard this injunction; they say that the remarriage of widows is in fact prohibited among jangams, while among other classes of Lingayats it is the result of the growth of custom. As with the other Hindu communities who practise remarriage, the second ceremony is very simple; there is no music, no guests are invited and in some instances the ceremony takes place at night or in a

[22] Thurston v.III p.241

darkened room. Widows are expected to marry widowers and remarried couples are not allowed to take part in the marriage ceremonies of others. In practice, however, it would appear that every jangam has his price and Thurston[23] refers to a case where after a great deal of money changed hands a girl was remarried according to the form in use for first marriages.

The marriage ideal to which the high castes and brahmins conform is that of the kanya dan (gift of a virgin), in which the bride's parents make a 'gift' of their daughter along with as big a dowry as can be provided. It is to this ideal that the Kathiawar brahmins refer when they say that widows cannot remarry because a gift can only be made once. There is no such ideology concerning the bridegroom; it is the bride's transition from virginity to sexual experience which is the crucial factor in this saṃskāra (rite of passage). Marriage is thus a ritual which a woman can go through only once but one which a man can repeat. A second reason for the difference of attitude towards the remarriage of widows and that of widowers among the high castes and brahmins is the belief that the marriage relationship is not ended by the death of the spouse (Eth.6e,7b). The remarriage of a widower is acceptable since the high castes and brahmins have a long tradition of polygamy; therefore a man simply acquires a second wife who often behaves as a subordinate to her dead predecessor (Eth.6e). The remarriage of a widow, however, is

[23] v.IV p.278

unacceptable since the high castes and brahmins have no tradition of polyandry so a second alliance is viewed in terms of an adulterous relationship. A second marriage is in fact worse than leaving one's husband for another because the conduct of the widow is believed to affect her husband's well-being in the world beyond and when a man is believed to go to hell if one strand of his widow's hair falls on the ground (Eth.7b), how much more is he likely to suffer if his widow enters into sexual relations with another man.

A corollary for the difference of attitude towards the remarriage of widows and that of widowers among the high castes and brahmins concerns their position at the top of the hypergamous marriage system. It is generally accepted in Hindu society that women may marry men of the same caste or of higher caste than themselves (given that their parents can give sufficient dowry to make up for the difference in caste status) while men may marry brides from the same caste or lower castes. In the highest castes women do not have the option of marrying into the caste above them and therefore must compete with women from lower castes for a husband. The shortage of available men means that widowers are an acceptable option in the case of families who cannot afford the dowry necessary to secure a young man marrying for the first time.

Although the lower castes and tribes allow widow remarriage, it is clearly a very low grade ritual compared with that of the first marriage. Like the high castes and brahmins, the marriage

ideal tends to be that of the kanya dan and thus widow remarriage cannot be regarded as a proper marriage ceremony because the 'gift' has already been given; as the Dhanwārs put it,"A woman cannot be anointed twice with the marriage oil." This means that marriage to a widow does not constitute that essential rite of passage through which every man and woman must go before they die in order to prevent their becoming permanent ghosts. Widow remarriage to someone who already has a wife or to a widower is acceptable because such men have already received the kanya dan on the occasion of their first marriage and therefore have gone through the proper ritual processing. If a bachelor marries a widow, however, he will suffer the fate of an unmarried man at his death unless special measures are taken to prevent this calamity. Therefore he must go through a full marriage ceremony with a substitute virgin bride before he can marry a widow.

Widow remarriage is not only an inferior ritual, it is also a highly inauspicious process from which the married women of the community must be protected. The bride is inauspicious since she is held to be responsible for the death of her first husband and because she is married to a ghost or Ancestor rather than a human being. The ritual itself is also inauspicious because the widow's link to her ghost husband must be severed during the course of the ceremony, because not even the castes which allow widow remarriage have a tradition of polyandry: it is therefore unacceptable for a woman to have two husbands. Unlike the higher castes, however, they fear not so much the tortures that the

first husband will suffer in the world beyond if his wife enters into an adulterous relationship as the tortures the second husband will endure in this world as a result of the ghost's anger. Indeed, at the lowest tribal level, where the ideal of the kanya dan is not really evident, this appears to be the primary reason for the dislike of widow remarriage. The second husband's safety is entirely dependent on the efficacy of the exorcism procedures in the marriage ceremony.

The widow's ritual status is not changed by her remarriage; she is still an inauspicious person who must not take part in auspicious ceremonies such as marriage. Her social status, however, does change on her remarriage so that she occupies a position midway between that of a widow and a woman whose first husband is still alive. She may wear some or all of the badges of a married woman and her children are legitimate and have rights to their father's property but are unlikely to be able to contract marriage alliances with children of a first marriage.

Low caste attitudes towards widows are not significantly different from those of higher castes and it would seem that widow remarriage is due to economic considerations and the position of the low castes in the hypergamous marriage system rather than to more liberal attitudes towards women whose husbands have died. Traditionally, high caste women neither take paid employment nor tend family lands, so when a high caste man marries, his extended family receives an economically unproductive member into their midst and the dowry accompanying

the bride can be seen, in part, as a form of compensation for the extra financial burden that she places on the household. In the lower castes women have traditionally taken paid employment outside the home or made a substantial contribution to the pool of family labour working owned or rented land, so in many of these communities bridewealth is paid to compensate the woman's family for the loss of an economic asset. The common practice of marrying a widow to her husband's brother ensures that the bridewealth is not lost and, even more importantly, keeps the land which the widow has inherited from her husband within the family. Coupled to the traditional economic value of low caste women is the fact that at the bottom of the hypergamous marriage system women may be in short supply, in which case widows are the only option open to men who are too poor to pay the price of a girl marrying for the first time. When castes who rise in the social system abandon widow remarriage they are not therefore abandoning old ideas about widows and adopting those of the castes which they wish to emulate so much as moving from a position where economic considerations and their position in the marriage system forced them to practise widow remarriage despite their distaste for it.

It is interesting that the Liṅgāyats, whose widows, it theory, are neither impure nor inauspicious, use a remarriage ceremony which resembles the inauspicious second marriage ritual of the low castes. Liṅgāyats of high social standing follow high caste brahminical convention even though in this case it was

expressly condemned by their founder, whilst the lower caste Liṅgāyats' remarriage ceremony seems to indicate that their attitudes towards widows are no different from those of other low caste communities.

The Garuḍa Purāṇa.

With the exception of a few brahminical communities which still use the Vedic rites[1], the majority of Hindus claim that their funeral ceremonies are based on the Garuḍa Purāṇa. The text which is generally regarded as authoritative on funeral rites is the Uttarakhaṇḍa section of the Garuḍa Purāṇa, which is popularly known as the Pretakalpa or Pretakhaṇḍa. The Uttarakhaṇḍa is an unsystematic and repetitious account of death and the beyond. It contains material on karma, rebirth and release from rebirth, the path to Yama, the fate of pretas (ghosts) and the torments of hell, interspersed with instructions about rites for the dying person, the corpse and the ghost. It also contains legends recalling the Buddhist Petavatthu, in which ghosts who have been unable to progress to the state of Ancestor relate the cause of their wretched existence. Hazra[2] has argued that the whole section is a later addition to the Garuḍa Purāṇa since it has a fresh beginning, suggesting that it is a separate work; the subjects dealt with are not mentioned in the summary of contents in the main body of the Garuḍa Purāṇa (1:3) and there are no quotations from this section in the Nibandhas. It is difficult to establish the date at which this material became the Uttarakhaṇḍa of the Garuḍa Purāṇa since this is dependent on establishing a date for the main body of the text and opinions as to the date

[1] e.g. the Tamil Srī-Vaiṣṇava brahmins described by Aiyangar, who follow the scool of Āpastamba of the Kṛṣṇa-Yajurvedins.

[2] p.144

for the extent Pūrvakhaṇḍa vary from the sixth century to the tenth or eleventh century A.D.[3]

As is the case with the Pūrvakhaṇḍa, the Uttarakhaṇḍa does not exist in a definitive version, and although participants are unanimous in their assertion that their funeral rites are based on this text, there is in fact a great deal of confusion as to what exactly is meant when they refer to the Garuḍa Purāṇa Pretakalpa. Of the Garuḍa Purāṇa editions available, the Sarasvati edition[4] has an Uttarakhaṇḍa of 1401 verses and thirty-five chapters; the Venkateswara version[5] has 2895 verses and forty-nine chapters and the Vangavasi version[6] has 2691 verses and forty-five chapters[7]. The Venk. and the Vang. versions are relatively similar but the Sarasvati edition is very different; not only is it shorter but the subject matter which it has in common with the others rarely appears in the same place as it does in the other two versions[8].

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[3] Rocher p.177

[4] Edited by Jivananda Vidyasagar, Calcutta, Sarasvati Press, 1890

[5] Manuscript form. Bombay, Venkateswara Steam Press, 1906. English translation in volume II and III of The Garuḍa Purāṇa, translated and edited by a board of scholars (Ancient Indian Tradition And Mythology series, ed. J.L.Shastri), Delhi, Motilal Banarsidas, 1979,1980.

[6] Edited by Panchanana Tarkaratna, Calcutta, Vangavasi Press, 1890

[7] Gangadharan p.84

[8] ibid.

The problem of exactly what is referred to by the term Garuḍa Purāṇa Pretakalpa is further complicated by the fact that a popular Sāroddhāra (digest) of the Garuḍa Purāṇa Uttarakhaṇḍa, written by Naunidhirāma, is also commonly referred to by this title. As Gangadharan[9] points out, despite its name, it is in fact an elaboration of the Uttarakhaṇḍa in which the subject matter is treated more systematically and supplemented with material from other Purāṇas. The Sāroddhāra is therefore almost as long as the Uttarakhaṇḍa, consisting of sixteen chapters and 1275 verses[10]. The author of this text and the commentary which accompanies it, describes himself as 'Purāṇa Reciter' (purāṇasya vaktā) of king Śrīśārdula of Jhuñjhunūnagara which Abegg identifies as the present Jhuñjhunu in Jaipur, Rajasthan[11]. As with the Pūrvakhaṇḍa and the Uttarakhaṇḍa, it is again difficult to ascribe a date to this work.

Given the fact that the Garuḍa Purāṇa is firmly established as the text which is the basis for all funeral rites, the published editions probably represent only a small sample of the variations which exist. The unsystematic nature of the Uttarakhaṇḍa encourages the production of local digests and the conviction that it is the authority for all funeral ritual may lead to these local versions including purely local customs in order to provide textual justification for established practices.

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[9] p.122

[10] Abegg p.30

[11] p.27 ftnt.

I propose to provide a summary of funeral practices in the Garuḍa Purāṇa using the categories employed for the ethnography and in the interests of clarity I will follow the Venkateswara version of the Uttarakhaṇḍa along with Abegg's annotated translation of the Sāroddhāra. I will referer to these two sources as G.P. (Garuḍa Purāṇic material) throughout. A detailed comparison of the three different editions of the Uttarakhaṇḍa can be found in Gangadharan (p.84-100 and p.125-142).

1a. Removal Of The Dying Person From The Bed.

The dying person is removed from his bed onto an area of ground smeared with cow dung and strewn with darbha grass and sesame seeds[12]. According to Utt.K., at the moment of death a man should also have darbha grass placed in his hands and strewn over his body. Sār.[13] states that rākṣasas, piśācas, bhūtas, pretas (types of evil spirits and ghosts) and Yama's followers enter a cot above the ground and according to Utt.K.[14] a person who breathes his last on a cot dies a bad death and becomes a permanent ghost unless nārāyaṇa bali is performed for him. The ground is said to be smeared with cow dung in order to purify it and to prevent evil spirits and ghosts entering the area and attacking the corpse[15]. Darbha grass is said to enable a man to

[12] Utt.K. 2:7-8; 2:28-9; 15:6; Sār. 9:3-4

[13] 9:19

[14] 4:104-12

[15] Utt.K. 2:10; 15:6, 29:9-10; Sār. 9:19

burn off his sins[16] and allow him to enter Viṣṇu's heaven[17] even if he has no son[18] and is not qualified to perform Vedic rites[19]. Darbha grass is said to be efficacious because it is born from Viṣṇu's hair[20] and is the abode of Brahmā (at the root), Viṣṇu (in the middle) and Śiva (at the tip)[21]. Sesame seed is said to destroy the evil spirits and cause them to flee[22] and is efficacious because it is produced from Viṣṇu's perspiration[23]. Utt.K. also mentions in this context that it can destroy the person's sins[24]; Sār., however, refers to this property in connection with sesame as one of the last gifts made by the dying man (G.P.1c). Utt.K. mentions a further property of sesame and darbha grass stating that they help the relatives to shape a new body for the dying person's spirit[25] though it is not clear whether this refers to a body for the ghost or a new body in the form of rebirth.

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[16] Utt.K. 29:7

[17] Utt.K. 2:27; 29:8,27; 32:96; Sār. 9:9,12

[18] Sār. 9:9

[19] Utt.K. 2:27; 29:27

[20] Utt.K. 2:19; Sār. 9:12

[21] Utt.K. 2:21-3; 29:20; Sār. 9:13

[22] Utt.K. 2:16; 29:15; Sār. 9:11

[23] Utt.K. 2:16, 29:15; Sār 9:11

[24] 2:17; 29:16

[25] 32:29

The dying person's head should be placed to the north or east[26] and a maṇḍala (circular diagram) should be circumscribed round him[27]. Utt.K. claims that the man who is laid with his head to the east or north achieves the sublime regions if his sins are minimal[28]. It also says that unless the dying person lies within a maṇḍala he will not get reborn for some time but will instead exist in the air where he will not receive the śrāddhas and libations offered by his relatives[29]. The maṇḍala is said by both texts to be efficacious because Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Lakṣmī and all the other gods including Hutāśana (the sacrificial fire) reside within it[30].

Tulasī (sacred basil) and a śālagrāma stone (sacred stone supposed to be pervaded by the presence of Viṣṇu) should be placed near the dying person[31]. In Utt.K. tulasī is said to guard the deceased against misfortune[32] while according to Sār.[33] the house which contains a tulasī bush is like a tīrtha (sacred bathing place) in that it is not visited by the servants of Yama. In Sār. it is said that Yama cannot see a man who dies with

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[26] Utt.K. 32:88,98

[27] Utt.K. 29:12-14; Sār.9:17

[28] 32:98

[29] Utt.K. 2:15; 29:13-14

[30] Utt.K. 2:13; 32:97; Sār.9:17

[31] Utt.K. 15:7; Sār 9:3-4

[32] Utt.K. 2:24; 29:25

[33] 9:7

tulasī in his hand even if he has committed hundreds of sins, while according to Utt.K. by growing a tulasī plant the sin accumulated through various births is wiped out[34]. Both sources state that death in the presence of a tulasī leads to liberation[35]. Death near a śālagrāma is likewise thought to remove all sins and lead to liberation[36].

The ethnographic accounts seems to correspond closely to the the texts as far as the rites are concerned but of the explanations for the removal of the dying man onto a specially prepared area only that given by the Kāṭhiāwār brahmins (Eth.1a) corresponds to that given in these versions of the Garuḍa Purāṇa. The textual explanations for the various rites seem to fall into two categories: exorcistic, in which the rites are said to protect the dying man from becoming a permanent ghost as the result of attack from or possession by evil spirits and other ghosts; and purificatory, in which the ceremonies are seen as removing the contamination caused by the dying person's past sins. Several of the rites are explained as performing both these functions and indeed the two ideas are closely linked because evil spirits and permanent ghosts, who live in and feast on the filth of the cremation grounds, represent the forces of impurity. Therefore, the exorcistic function is also purificatory in that

[34] 38:11

[35] Utt.K. 38:10, Sār. 9:6

[36] Utt.K. 38:10; Sār. 9:5

by driving away the evil spirits and permanent ghosts the relatives are protecting the body from external as well as internal sources of impurity. The texts do not explain why the forces of impurity are attracted to the dying person, but in their accounts of a person's last moments they describe how a person expires foaming with saliva and passing urine and excrement[37], substances which ghosts and evil spirits feed on, as shown in the stories told by the ghosts[38]. The preparations for death therefore reveal the ambiguous status of the dead person as both pure sacrifice and impure magnet for the forces which feed on filth. As in the ethnography (Eth.1a) and the Vedic material (Ved.1a), the orientation of the dying man also reveals his ambiguous ritual status: his head is placed in the north or east, the directions of man and the gods respectively, but he faces south towards the kingdom of death. Utt.K. refers only to the auspicious north or east orientation and not to the southern orientation and this is probably because the south is not only an inauspicious direction but it is also the direction of the path which, according to G.P., is taken by the the wicked to the kingdom of Yama[39].

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[37] Sār. 1:29

[38] Utt.K. 7:16-18; 22:55-57

[39] Sār.2

<u>1b. Putting Substances Into The Mouth Of The Dying Man Or Corpse.</u>

Both sources state that gold should be put in the dying or dead man's mouth[40] and Utt.K. states that pieces of gold should be put on the other bodily apertures as well[41]. It is said that one[42] or five[43] jewels should be put in the mouth of the dying person. According to Utt.K. when the five gems are put in the dying person's mouth, knowledge dawns on him[44] and it also states that this practice helps the new body for the spirit to grow (i.e. the new body for the ghost).

Putting holy water in the mouth of the dying man is only mentioned in Sār.[45], which refers to the use of water sanctified by being poured over a <u>śālagrāma</u> stone and of Ganges water. Both are said to destroy all sins[46] and cause a man to reside in the abode of Viṣṇu freeing him from further rebirth[47]. The Ganges is said to be so efficacious that by just saying its name in the last moments of life a man goes to the abode of Viṣṇu never to reborn. Sār. also mentions placing a leaf of <u>tulasī</u> in the mouth

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40 Utt.K. 15:9; 32:88; Sār 9:21

41 Utt.K. 15:9-10

42 Sār. 9:22

43 Utt.K. 32:99; 34:29

44 Utt.K. 32:99

45 9:21-31

46 9:22.23

47 9:22,26

of a dying person, which is again said to enable a man to reach the abode of Viṣṇu[48]

Again the rites in the ethnography seem to follow the textual material although the participants tend to use only one of the substances mentioned rather than all four. Pañcagavya which is put into the dying person's mouth in many ethnographic accounts does not appear in the textual material, but as it is widely understood to be purificatory it seems to perform the same function as the substances mentioned. The explanations of the high caste participants correspond with those in the text; the low caste explanation that the gold is money for the journey does not appear in the Purāṇic material.

1c. Last Gifts And Words.

The dying man is told to meditate on and recite the names of Viṣṇu in his ten avatāras (incarnations)[49]. Relatives are also called upon to recite and meditate on Viṣṇu's holy names[50]. Recitation of and meditation on the name of Viṣṇu removes sins[51] and causes the dying person to be completely absorbed in Brahmā[52]. The Puruṣa Sūkta[53], the Sāma Sūkta[54] and the Bhāgavata

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[48] 9:9

[49] Utt.K. 32:95; Sār. 8:11

[50] Utt.K. 30:37; Sār. 8:9-11

[51] Sār. 8:12,23

[52] Utt.K. 32:101

Purāṇa[55] are also mentioned as suitable for recitation. If the dying man is unable to recite his sons and other relatives should do it for him[56].

Great importance is attached in both texts to gifts being offered directly rather than by an intermediary. The offering of gifts by a son or relatives on behalf of a dying man, therefore, is said to be less efficacious than if he offers them himself while still healthy[57]. The argument is that the affection of relatives lasts only until a man's death and after that quickly fades so he cannot be sure that they will offer gifts on his behalf after his death. The texts, therefore, mention a series of gifts which should ideally be offered while a man is still healthy but failing that should be given as a man is dying. Utt.K. contains a series of gifts called pādas, consisting of an umbrella, ring, cloths, sandals etc., some items of which are mentioned in connection both with the gift of the bed (on the twelfth day) and with the gift of the Vaitaraṇī cow. As Sār. includes these with the gift of the bed only, they will be included in the summary of the gifts on the twelfth day.

The main gifts to be offered by the dying man are the series

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[53] Utt.K. 32:93

[54] Utt.K. 15:8

[55] Sār. 9:32

[56] Utt.K. 32:93

[57] Utt.K. 14:2-3; 30:9; 47:37; Sār. 8:62-3

of eight[58] or ten[59] special items and that of the Vaitaraṇī cow. The series of ten gifts is said to be a cow, earth, sesame seeds, gold, butter, cloth, grains, sugar, silver and salt[60]. The eight gifts are said to be sesame seeds, iron, gold, cotton, salt, seven grains, earth and a cow[61].

Sār. states that the three different colours of sesame seeds remove the sins of speech, thought and action[62]. According to Utt.K. this gift pleases Yama[63]. The gift of iron is said to propitiate the iron weapons of Yama[64] and to bring contentment on the way to and in the world of Yama[65]. The gift of gold yields happiness in heaven[66], pleasing the Ṛṣis, gods and Brahmā in the court of Yama[67]. The gift of cotton wards off fear from Yama's servants[68] and the gift of seven grains propitiates them[69]. Salt

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[58] Utt.K. 4:7-8, 12-14; Sār. 8:32-3

[59] Utt.K. 4:4, 12-14

[60] Utt.K. 4:4

[61] Utt.K. 4:7-8; Sār. 8:33

[62] 8:36 (Utt.K. uses a similar explanation for the sesame strewn on the ground where the dying person lies.)

[63] 30:14

[64] Utt.K. 30:25; Sār 8:39

[65] Sār. 8:42

[66] Utt.K. 30:16; Sār 8:43

[67] Sār. 8:42

[68] Sār. 8:45

[69] Utt.K. 30:17; Sār 8:47

is said to be produced from the body of Viṣṇu[70] and delivers the dying person from fear of Yama[71]. It opens the doorway to heaven and should be offered if a person does not die but lingers on in the body[72]. The earth or plot of land enables the giver to go to heaven[73] and as he goes along the path to the kingdom of Yama he is fully satisfied and richly adorned[74]. Sār. states that for those who are not kings the gift of a cow is equal to the gift of land but the king who fails to give land faces many rebirths as a beggar without even a village hut[75].

It is not entirely clear from the texts whether the Vaitaraṇī cow is the cow offered as one of the eight or ten gifts or whether it is considered to be a separate offering. The procedure for the gift of the Vaitaraṇī cow is described in great detail in both texts[76]. The cow should be either black or tawny and should be richly adorned. It should be offered to a brahmin along with a golden image of Yama and a raft made of sugar cane. The performer holds on to the cow's tail and recites a mantra dedicating it to Viṣṇu and asking that he be allowed to cross the river Vaitaraṇī. It is said that this gift enables a man to

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[70] Utt.K. 4:15

[71] Sār. 8:45

[72] Utt.K. 4:15

[73] Utt.K. 31:2; Sār.8:51

[74] Utt.K. 34:6

[75] 8:53,55

[76] Utt.K. 47:25-36; Sār. 8:70-86

travel by a righteous path to the kingdom of Yama[77] and prevents his being troubled by the river Vaitaraṇī.

Both texts mention more generalized almsgiving as well; sesame seeds and kuśa grass are to be given to the lame, one eyed and blind[78] and presents and food are to be offered to brahmins[79], because fire may consume the body but the fruits of a man's actions remain with him[80].

It is stated that if a man becomes a deathbed ascetic (ātura saṃnyāsa) by saying, "I have relinquished", with his dying breath, he achieves release and is not reborn[81]. This same goal is also achieved by the man who fasts to death[82] in his last hours and the man who dies at a sacred place[83]. The man who dies on his way to a sacred place achieves the fruit of performing a sacrifice for every step he has taken[84].

The ethnographic accounts of the rites correspond closely to the texts, as do the participants' explanations for the various

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[77] Sār. 8:84 (in Sār. 14:50f. these are named as the Eastern, Northern and Western ways.)

[78] Utt.K. 30:12

[79] Sār. 8:7

[80] Utt.K. 12:26-27; Sār.8:102f.

[81] Utt.K. 4:37; Sār. 9:34-35

[82] Utt.K. 4:39

[83] Utt.K. 4:38

[84] ibid.

last gifts. It seems that the texts are presenting an idealized account of the gifts that are to be given and that while the richest are expected to follow their prescription exactly the less well off follow it as closely as their circumstances allow. Hence a cow is an acceptable substitute for a plot of land and the readers of Sār. are told that all gifts whether great or small are acceptable as long as they are offered with faith[85]. The raft in the gift of the Vaitaraṇī cow seems to be a representation of the boat which takes the man who has offered the Vaitaraṇī cow across the terrible river of pus and blood[86].

1d. Preparation Of The Corpse.

Those who are righteous depart through the higher apertures of the body[87] while the spirits of sinners escape through the anus[88]. A body from which the life force has departed becomes untouchable, smells foul and is disliked by all; it is eaten by worms, transformed into excrement or reduced to ashes[89].

According to Sār. the son and relatives should shave in order to remove sins[90]. According to Utt.K. gold should be put in

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[85] 8:110-12

[86] Utt.K. 16:25-8; Sār. 2:66-7

[87] Utt.K. 11:9-10; Sār. 9:36

[88] Utt.K. 31:27; Sār.1:29

[89] Utt.K. 2:55; 15:20-24; Sār. 9:40-41

[90] 9:4-6 (Utt.K. 4:72-3 mentions that the son and relatives are shaven when they bathe after the funeral but does not say exactly when the shaving takes place.)

the apertures of the dead man's body[91]. Both sources state that the corpse should be bathed with pure water, smeared with sandal paste or Ganges clay, decorated with garlands and covered with new cloths[92].

Wearing his sacred thread in the inauspicious direction[93] the deceased's son makes the first ekoddiṣṭa offering (to the deceased's spirit alone) consisting of a piṇḍa laid on the spot where the person breathed his last[94]. The offering is said to be for the dead person as śava (corpse) pleasing the earth and its presiding deity[95] and preserving the sanctity of the body for offering in the fire[96]. According to Sār. the daughter-in-law along with other relatives should circumambulate the corpse and worship it before the start of the funeral procession[97].

According to Utt.K. a dead body should not be left unattended for if it is touched mishaps occur[98] and food eaten

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[91] 15:8-10 (see also section 1b G.P.)

[92] Utt.K. 4:41-2; 15:11; Sār. 10:7-9

[93] Sār. 10:8 (Utt.K. makes general statements about the thread in the inauspicious direction pleasing the Ancestors 2:20-1; 29:18-19 and the relatives are described as wearing their threads in this direction at the bath after the cremation 4:72-3 but it does not describe the point at which the change to wearing the thread in the inauspicious direction takes place).

[94] Utt.K. 4:48-9; 15:30-31; Sār. 10:8

[95] Utt.K. 4:48-9; 15:32-3; Sār. 10:8-9

[96] Utt.K. 15:36; Sār.10:15

[97] 10:11

[98] 35:41-3

while there is a corpse in the village is known as flesh and blood (i.e. no one should eat while the body is in the village)[99]. It goes on to say that people should avoid chewing betel, sexual intercourse and the offering of pinḍas (presumably to other Ancestors)[100]. Ceremonial ablutions, gifts, sacrifices and libations and worship of the gods are futile and the violation of any of these customs is said to tarnish the dead man with sin[101].

The preparation of the corpse in G.P. on the whole corresponds closely to the ethnography. No reference, however, is made to the preferential treatment of the corpses of married women, a feature of all four groups in the ethnography (Eth.1d), neither is there any indication of the Southern low caste practice of displaying the corpse in a pandal.

The ambiguous attitude towards the corpse in the ethnography reflects that shown in the textual material where the body, though impure and disgusting, is bathed in pure water, covered with new (therefore pure) cloths and protected from the attacks of the external forces of impurity by the gift of pinḍas. Furthermore, though the corpse is worshipped as if it is an auspicious object and decorated with garlands and sandal paste

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[99] 35:44

[100] 35:45

[101] Utt.K. 35:46-7

all auspicious rites such as worship of the gods are futile while it remains in the village.

1e. The Funeral Procession.

According to Sār., the son and other relatives should bear the corpse on their shoulders and any son who does so is said to pay off the debt of parental kindness and reap the reward of a horse sacrifice at every step[102]. Utt.K. states that the corpse's hands and feet together with the covering cloth should be tied to the bier, otherwise there is a risk of attacks from piśācas and that it must not be removed at night for fear of spirits roaming in the sky[103]. Utt.K. also says that the body should be removed through the back doorway[104] and that relatives should accompany the procession reciting a gāthā (religious verse not belonging to the Vedas) or the apeta hymn (R.V. 10.14.9)[105].

Both sources refer to the offering of piṇḍas during the funeral procession. The first is offered at the doorway addressing the departed as pāntha (passenger)[106] except in the Utt.K. chapter 35 version which omits the offering of this piṇḍa[107]. It is said to please Vāstu and the household deities[108]

[102] 10:11

[103] 35:41-3

[104] 15:11

[105] 4:54

[106] Utt.K. 4:50; 15:32, Sār. 10:10

[107] 35:33-4

[108] Utt.K. 4:50; 15:34

and ensure that evil spirits do no harm[109]. Two Utt.K. descriptions mention another pinda to be given at the crossroads[110] or in the courtyard[111] which is said to please the Khecara (bird)[112]. According to the Utt.K. version in chapter 4[113] it is the corpse which is known as Khecara while in the other version the Khecara is said to live in the courtyard and appears to be one of the spirits or deities[114]. Halfway to the cremation ground the funeral party halts and a further pinda is offered[115]. According to Utt.K.'s chapter four version and Sār. the deceased is called bhūta at the resting place and in the chapter fifteen version it is offered to the deity Bhūta. The offering of the pindas ensures that the body is fit to offer in the fire, preventing the presiding deities and spirits from interfering with it[116].

It is interesting that whereas in the ethnography the son tends to lead the funeral procession carrying the fire pot (Eth.1e), in Utt.K. he is envisaged as being one of the pall

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109 Sār. 10:10

110 4:48-9

111 15:30-1

112 4:50; 15:34

113 v.50

114 15:34

115 Utt.K. 4:51; 15:25, Sār. 10:14

116 Utt.K. 15:39, Sār. 10:15

bearers. There is no reference to strewing the way with Ganges water or foodstuffs, a common feature in the ethnographic accounts of all four groups. The practice of offering pindas and the explanations in the ethnographic accounts of the higher castes, however, correspond closely to the textual material. The confusion over the offering to the Khecara possibly arose because of the ambiguous status of the deceased, who is both a pure sacrifice and a dangerous ghost. It seems likely that this is a crow offering and in one version a pinda is offered on behalf of the deceased who is refered to as crow because he is a ghost and crows represent ghosts. Since crows represent ghosts, however, they also represent the spirits which might impede the progress of the funeral procession and contaminate the corpse and the offering in the other version is made in order to please the Khecara so that the body may be taken through the courtyard. The texts offer no explanation for the halt on the way to the cremation ground, although several communities offered explanations for this practice in the ethnography (Eth.1e), neither is there any reference to the bier being reversed after the halt, another common feature in the ethnography.

Stage 2. Disposal Of The Corpse.

2a. Methods Of Disposal Of The Corpse.

According to both sources the corpses of adults should be cremated[1]. The corpse is laid down with its head to the south[2] or the north[3] and the chief mourner digs up an area of the cremation ground, smears it with cow dung and sprinkles it with water[4]. He constructs an altar (vedikā) and on this the wood for the pyre is laid[5]. According to Sār. the pyre should consist of sandal, basil, palāśa and aśvattha wood[6]. The corpse's cloth should be torn in two and one of these pieces should be laid over the body[7]. Utt.K. states that the fire should be lit in accordance with the Vedic rites avoiding cāṇḍāla, citā or patita fires (the fires of outcastes)[8]. According to Sār. the fire should be lit with (sacred) grass[9] but Naunidhirāma states in his commentary that this is only the procedure for those who have not laid down the sacred fires (niragnika) and that the pyre should be lit by a

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[1] Utt.K. 4:56ff; 15:42ff. Sār. 10:16ff.

[2] Utt.K. 4:56

[3] Sār. 10:16

[4] Utt.K. 4:58; 15:43; Sār. 10:17

[5] ibid.

[6] 10:20

[7] Utt.K. 4:58

[8] 4:63-4

[9] 10:24

firebrand from the sacred fire if the dead person was sāgnika (one who has kindled the sacred fires)[10].

Although in the ethnography those who are too poor to afford wood resort to burial and immersion in sacred rivers the texts envisage no other method of disposing of a normal adult's corpse other than by cremation. As in the Vedic textual material, the pyre is constructed on a vedikā. The sacrificial purity of cremation is further emphasised by Utt.K.'s statement that a body ought not to be burnt with fire from the impure castes.

2b. Rites Concerning The Spirits And Functionaries Of The Cremation Ground.

According to both texts piṇḍas are offered at the cremation ground to satisfy the demons and prevent them from harming the corpse. The number of piṇḍas prescribed varies: in Utt.K.15 one piṇḍa is given and performs the dual function of forestalling pain due to the cremation and satisfying the demons[11]; in Utt.K.35 three piṇḍas are given one of which is known as the prativeśyaka and is said to be for the spirits of the cremation ground[12]; in Sār. two piṇḍas are offered, which in conjunction with those offered during the earlier stages of the funeral are said to prevent demons from harming the body[13].

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[10] Abegg p.138 fn.

[11] 15:52

[12] 35:33-4

[13] 10:21-3

The texts state that before the body is cremated the performer should worship the deity Kravyāda with flowers and rice and should recite the words, "O Kravyāda, the originator of beings, the source of the universe, thou art the originator, saviour and destroyer of the people. Take this dead person to heaven"[14]. According to Utt.K., as the body burns the chief mourner should offer homas to Yama, Brahmā and Jātavedas[15]. In both texts, as the fire burns the corpse it is addressed with the words, "Thou art born of him; may he be born again from you. He is an offering to the heaven-world. O Fire blaze forth!"[16].

It is interesting that in the Vedic material it is the Jātavedas fire which leads the dead person to heaven but here it is the Kravyāda form. It seems that the distinction between the two types of fire, Kravyāda (the devourer of the uncooked) and Jātavedas (the fire which cooks and transports oblations), which exists in the Vedic funeral ceremony is here lost. In the Vedic ritual the corpse is protected from destruction by the Kravyāda fire through the offering of a goat (Ved.2b.) so that the Jātavedas fire may cook and transport it to heaven. In the Purāṇic material the Kravyāda fire is not treated as an aspect of Agni from which the corpse must be protected but rather as a transporter, as in the Vedic notion of the Jātavedas fire.

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[14] Utt.K. 4:65; 15:44-5; Sār. 10:19

[15] 15:48

[16] Utt.K. 4:66-8; 15:49; Sār. 10:58

The mantra expresses the Vedic cyclical sacrificial view of the universe: sacrificial fire is born from man and man on the pyre is born to existence in the heaven world (Ved.2b). This is reinterpreted in non-sacrificial terms by Naunidhirāma, who states in his commentary that this mantra refers to man being born from Viṣṇu[17].

2c. Offerings To The Corpse.

According to the texts the piṇḍas which are offered by the pyre[18] or in the hands of the corpse[19] are not only to appease the spirits of the cremation ground but also to comfort the deceased[20], to assuage the pain due to cremation[21] and to ensure that the corpse is fit for offering[22]. A homa offering is also made to the deceased while the fire is burning, using the mantra, "lomabhyaḥ svāhā" (Vāj.Samh.39:10; Tait.Samh.7:3,16,2)[23].

The ethnographic accounts of the brahminical communities (Eth.2c) reflect the textual material with regard to the corpse offerings during the disposal of the body. The practice of placing foodstuffs or coins in the corpse's mouth and that of

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[17] Abegg p.143 fn.

[18] Utt.K. 15:37,40

[19] Utt.K. 35:33-4; Sār. 10:21

[20] Utt.K. 2:69-70

[21] Utt.K. 15:22

[22] Sār. 10:24

[23] Utt.K. 15:46; Sār. 10:18

offering gifts to low caste people which both appear in accounts of the other groups are, however, not to be found in the textual material.

It is interesting that as the body burns the deceased is given an offering accompanied by a mantra taken from the Horse Sacrifice. Puhvel[24] argues that at some time horse and man may have been interchangeable as sacrificial victims. Both types of sacrifice are identified with the creation of the cosmic order; in the Puruṣa Sūkta the world is created from the self-sacrifice of the Primal Man, while the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad compares the world with the Sacrificial Horse[25], and in the myth which describes the first Horse Sacrifice as the result of Death offering up his own corpse, which changes into a horse[26], seems to identify horse and human victim. The corpse is treated as a horse/human sacrifice in the cremation and therefore takes on a cosmic significance. While at one level the funeral seeks to ensure the regeneration of the individual, at another level it seeks to ensure the regeneration of the universe.

2d. Pot-Breaking Ceremony And Skull Cracking Rites.

According to Sār. when the corpse is fully or half burnt the skull should be split open, in the case of the householder with a piece of wood and the case of an ascetic with a coconut[27]. This

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[24] p.159-72

[25] 1.1.1-2

[26] 1.2.6-7

[27] 10:56

is said to be so that the brahmarandhra is split open and the deceased attains the world of the Ancestors[28]. According to Sār. from the time the deceased is released from his body on the funeral pyre his condition as departed (departed) begins[29] and in Utt.K.[30] it is said that the deceased should be addressed as preta from the cremation onwards.

Neither text refers to a pot-breaking ceremony and interestingly Utt.K. makes no reference to skull-cracking either. The interpretations of the skull-cracking rite in the ethnography correspond with those in Sār.. The fact that it is only after the cremation that the deceased is addressed as preta suggests that although at one level the person is dead there is a sense in which he is still 'alive' until he is killed on the funeral pyre, and this is made explicit by Sār.'s statement that the deceased's condition as departed begins after his release on the pyre. Consequently he suffers on the pyre and his pain has to be dispelled by the offering of the preta piṇḍa (G.P.2c).

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[28] 10:57

[29] 10:21

[30] 15:38

2e. Protective Measures Against Ghosts.

According to the texts the mourners return from the cremation ground with the youngest members of the party[31] or the women[32] going in front.

The texts do not mention the order in which the relatives proceed to the cremation ground, but as the Vedic material (Ved.2e) states that the oldest go in front of the youngest on the way to the funeral it is possible that the order mentioned here for the return represents an inversion of that used for the journey from the house and as in the *sūtras* it is possible that the inversion of the outward procession is intended to maintain the sequence of those approaching the cremation ground, thus ensuring that the correct sequence of proximity to death is observed.

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[31] Utt.K. 4:86-7

[32] Utt.K. 34:22-3 Sār. 10:61

Stage 3. Rites Concerning The Return Home, The Collection Of The Bones Or Attention To The Grave And Associated Offerings.

3a. Bathing After The Funeral And The Start Of Mourning Restrictions.

Utt.K. states that before the mourners leave the cremation ground they should sit in the courtyard while a learned person versed in the Purāṇa (presumably the Garuḍa Purāṇa) alleviates their sorrow by discoursing on the hollowness of life[1]. Both sources mention that the dead person's virtues should be remembered and recounted[2] after the cremation.

As the mourners return from the cremation ground they should all bathe[3]. According to Sār. the women bathe first followed by the sons[4]. Utt.K. states that the mourners on reaching the water should say on behalf of the deceased, "We are taking a bath"[5]. They should then enter the water silently, wearing only one cloth, with the sacred thread in the inauspicious direction and with shaven heads[6].

Having taken a bath the mourners return home and there chew

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[1] 4:82-5

[2] Utt.K. 34:26; Sār. 10:61

[3] Utt.K. 4:69-70; 5:1; 15:53 Sār. 10:60

[4] 10:60

[5] 4:71

[6] Utt.K. 4:72-3 (Sār. includes shaving as part of the corpse preparation Gar.1d).

nimba leaves[7], rinse their mouths with water[8] and touch cow dung, sesame seeds, coral, a bull or any other auspicious thing[9]. According to Utt.K., after the sons and relatives have returned home they should observe impurity for ten nights, bathing three times a day, abstaining from spicy and salty food, observing celibacy and avoiding all pleasures[10].

The main features of the ethnography (Eth.3a) correspond closely with the textual descriptions of the bath and the start of mourning restrictions. The texts do not elaborate on the purpose of the bath beyond saying that it is for the deceased. The statement that the women bathe first corresponds with the Vedic material and it is possible that as in the Vedic accounts, this represents an inversion of the order in which the mourners proceed to the funeral ground (Ved.1e). As in the Vedic material, the texts assume the presence of the women at the funeral ground, although in the ethnography only lower caste women tend to be present at the disposal of the corpse while brahmin women do not accompany the procession beyond the confines of the village (Eth.1e). In the ethnography the recitation of the Garuḍa Purāṇa appears not as a feature of the end of the cremation but as a

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[7] Utt.K. 4:86-7; 15:55-6 Sār. 10:61

[8] Utt.K. 4:86-7; 5:2

[9] Utt.K. 4:86-7

[10] 5:4-7

daily event in some brahminical communities during the fourth stage ceremonies (Eth.4d).

3b. Lamp And Basket Ceremonies.

According to Sār., when the chief mourner returns home he should clean the place where the person died with cow dung and keep a lamp burning there, turned to the south, for twelve days[11]. According to Utt.K., lamps should be given every day for a year after the person's death to aid the deceased on his troublesome path[12]. Those who make gifts of lamps for the dead or themselves, placing them in temples or the houses of brahmins, are said to be able to traverse the Great Path without any distress[13] as the terrible darkness will be brightly illuminated for them[14].

The ethnographic accounts of the lamp offered by higher caste Hindus and brahmins correspond closely with the Sār. material but neither of the texts refers to the basket ceremony practised by the lower castes, outcastes and tribes. The Sār. version of the lamp gift follows the ritual timescale in which the year long-journey of the ghost is compressed into offerings made over twelve days while the Utt.K. scheme follows the literal timescale and lamps are offered for the twelve months that the

[11] 10:63

[12] 31:7

[13] Utt.K. 31:9-10

[14] Utt.K. 8:6; 31:4-5

ghost is travelling to its destination. In Utt.K. great stress is laid upon the lamp's benefit for the donor as well as for the recipient; it is said to light the way for the man who gives it as well as assist the dead person for whom it is given. The text, in this way, seeks to ensure that its ritual instructions are followed, for as the performer carries out the correct rituals for the dead person he is performing ceremonies which benefit him at his own death.

The idea that a man keeps his own home in sight as he travels on the path to Yama's kingdom appears several times in Purāṇic material[15] and Abegg[16] suggests that the gift of the lamp not only illumines the way along the terrible path but also lights up the dead man's home so that he can keep it in sight as he travels to Yama's kingdom.

3c. 'Cooling The Cemetery' And The Bone Collection Ceremony.

According to the texts the collection of the bones should take place on the first, third, seventh, ninth[17] or fourth day[18] after the cremation. Utt.K. includes among its material on the rites immediately following the cremation a statement that some sprinkle milk on the pyre[19] but according to Sār.[20] the pyre is

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[15] Sār. 1:36; Mārk.P. 10:75; Padma P. V 10:6; Matsya P. 18:6

[16] p.144 ftnt.

[17] Utt.K. 5:15

[18] Utt.K. 34:14 Sār. 10:67

[19] 15:57

sprinkled with milk and water during the bone collection. In Sār.'s account the chief mourner, having bathed and made himself pure, puts on a woollen thread and the pavitrī (sacred ring of kuśa grass)[21]. He places the bones on palāśa leaves, sprinkles them with milk and water and puts them in an earthen pot[22] which he buries in a hole fifteen paces to the north from the collection site[23]. The pot is then removed from the hole and taken to a tank where the bones are again sprinkled with milk and water[24]. Finally the bones are placed in a leaf box and dropped into the Ganges[25]. Disposal in the Ganges within ten days is said to destroy the dead man's sins[26] and enable him to attain the world of Brahmā, from which he never returns[27].

As in the ethnography (Eth.3c), the pouring of milk and water on the pyre either takes place at the end of the cremation or as part of the bone collection ceremony. The texts give no explanation or mantras for the rite but it is probable that as in the Vedic material (Ved.3c) and the explanations given in the

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[20] 10:70

[21] 10:68

[22] Sār. 10:71

[23] Sār. 10:75

[24] Sār. 10:76-7

[25] Sār. 10:78

[26] Sār. 10:81,84

[27] Sār. 10:79

ethnography the sprinkling of the pyre is intended to quench the flames and relinquish Agni's hold on the sacrificial victim. The ethnographic accounts of the Hindu bone collection ceremonies correspond closely with the textual material. As Abegg points out[28], woollen threads are used as a defense against demons, so in his preparations the chief mourner protects his ritual purity from pollution by the evil spirits of the cremation ground by wearing both the pavitrī and the woollen thread. Although the disposal of the pot of bones in a stream or tīrtha is mentioned in the Vedic material, most texts prescribe the burial of the bone-pot of an anāhitāgni (Ved.3c). Here, however, disposal in the Ganges has become the norm. As in the case of giving Ganges water to the dying man (Ved.1b), this seems to be an addition to the original Vedic material, possibly reflecting the growth and spread of ideas about the holiness of the river.

3d. Offerings Associated With The Bone Collection Or The Grave.

According to Sār. the chief mourner commences the bone collection ceremony with a grain oblation to the inhabitants of the burning ground offered with the mantra beginning "Yamāya Tvā" (Vāj.Samh. 37:11)[29]. He places the bones on palāśa leaves and sprinkles them with water and milk before placing them in the pot[30]. Having prepared a triangular plot of ground with cow dung,

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[28] p.145 fn.

[29] 10:69

[30] 10:71

he offers three rice balls in the three directions[31] and after collecting the ashes from the pyre he takes a three-legged stool and places on it a jar of water with its mouth uncovered[32]. He then makes an oblation of cooked rice, curds, clarified butter, water and sweetmeats for the departed[33]. He offers a rice ball which destroys the pain of cremation before removing the pot from the hole[34]. He then sprinkles the bones with milk and water and offers them sandal paste and saffron before disposing of them in the Ganges[35].

The ethnographic accounts of brahminical communities correspond with the texts in that the participants offer piṇḍas and foodstuffs to the deceased and make offerings to placate the denizens of the cremation ground at the bone collection ceremony (Eth.3d), but the rites as described in Sār. are first stage ceremonies only and there is no indication of a second stage, as appears in the ethnography, in which the foodstuffs and/or piṇḍas which have been offered to the ashes and bones are then offered to something or someone else. Abegg[36] suggests that the water jar on the stool represents an offering to the airborne spirit of the

[31] 10:72

[32] 10:73

[33] 10:74

[34] 10:77

[35] 10:77

[36] p.146 fn.

deceased, in which case the dead person is given offerings both as a disembodied spirit and as represented by the physical remains. The text supplies no explanations or mantras for the sprinkling of the bones with milk and water, but it is probable that as in the Vedic material this is part of the cooling ceremony in which the flames of the pyre are quenched and Agni is persuaded to relinquish the remains of the sacrificial victim (Ved.3d,G.P.3a).

3e. Planting Seeds.

Neither of the texts refers to the practice of planting seeds during the third stage rites. Sār. does, however, refer to a fourth stage ceremony in which the relatives, on the ninth day after death, take durva grass and parched grain to the house of the dead person and leave it there with the words,"May his family increase like durva grass, and radiate like parched grain"[37].

As in the ethnography (Eth.3e.), after the disposal of the corpse, the relatives look forward to new life with a ceremony in which they leave symbols of fertility in the dead man's house. The accompanying mantra in which they ask for the increase of the family suggests that, as in the case of eating the middle piṇḍa in a śrāddha ceremony (Eth.5c) and burying a child in the confines of the house (Eth.7a), the relatives seek to ensure that the recycling of life occurs in a very specific way and that life lost at the death of a member of the family is returned to the

[37] 11:35-6

family in the form of new children.

Stage 4. Offerings To The Ghost.

4a. Creating A Temporary Body For The Ghost.

According to Sār. the ceremony which must be performed for each of the first nine days after death includes the construction of a twice-born person out of kuśa grass which the chief mourner worships as part of the rite[1].

The text does not explicitly state that the figure represents the deceased but it does seem likely that it is meant to indicate the presence of the dead person at the ceremony and this is certainly how it is interpreted by Wood and Subramanyam[2]. It cannot be said, however, that the kuśa grass figure really acts as a temporary body for the ghost, since it would appear that a new kuśa grass figure is created for each day's ceremony and exists only for the duration of the rite, whereas the jivkhada and the other types of temporary body seen in the ethnography (Eth.4a.) are retained throughout the intermediate period and act as a focus for each day's offering.

Neither text mentions the necessity for a temporary body. According to Utt.K., after death the spirit exists in a body made of air (vāyuja) until it achieves the piṇḍa body constructed during the ten days after death[3]; like a caterpillar which lifts up the back feet only when the front feet are firmly anchored so

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[1] 11:27

[2] p.100

[3] 5:83; 10:75-82; 34:12-13

the soul leaves the mortal body only when the air-body is available for habitation[4].

4b. Offerings To The Airborne Spirit.

Both texts describe an offering of milk and water in an unbaked earthen vessel which should be given for three days to the airborne spirit of the deceased[5]. According to Sār. it is offered at the crossroads at sunset with the words,"Thou hast been burned with the fires of the burning ground. Thou hast been forsaken by relatives. Here is milk and here water; bathe and drink!" According to Utt.K.[6] the contents of the jar can be left at the crossroads[7] or poured on the sloping roof (of the deceased's house) or in the courtyard[8]. The airborne spirit drinks the milk on the first, second and third day[9], but after the three days and nights assumes a new body[10].

Whereas in the ethnography (Eth.4b) the offerings to the airborne spirit tend to be given daily throughout the intermediate period, in the texts they stop after three days. Since the statement about the new body occurs in the context of a

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[4] Utt.K. 10:75-7

[5] Utt.K. 15:59; 34:12-13; Sār. 10:64-66

[6] 15:59

[7] 34:12

[8] 15:59

[9] Utt.K. 34:13

[10] 15:67

discussion about the pindas of the first ten days, the idea seems to be that it is possible for the deceased to start inhabiting the pinda body after the third day although it is not completed until the tenth day. Once the transition has been effected no further offerings are made to the vāyuja spirit, whereas according to many ethnographic accounts the deceased simultaneously occupies a temporary body and receives milk and water as an airborne spirit.

4c. Offerings To Objects, People And Animals.

According to Sār. the daily rite performed during the first ten days includes an offering of food to the crows which the chief mourner offers up with the words,"I give this to NN"[11]. On his return each day he must give food to a cow before he can eat[12]. Both texts mention the chief mourner feeding brahmins as part of the ceremonies of the first ten days[13]. According to Utt.K. the chief mourner should continue to offer[14] and to eat the same type of food as he offered on the day of death[15] throughout the ten day period.

The range of live ghost representatives in the ethnography is very similar to that found in the texts (Eth.4c). Unlike the

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[11] 11:30

[12] Sār. 10:42

[13] Utt.K. 5:74; Sār. 11:39

[14] 5:20

[15] 15:64

ethnography, however, the texts do not say that the reaction of the crows is an important indication of the well-being of the deceased. It is interesting that in the textual material the chief mourner is required to eat the same foodstuffs as he offers to the ghost; he not only gives food to the deceased but also acts as the dead person's representative and eats on his behalf.

4d. Piṇḍa Offerings.

According to both texts the chief mourner should offer one piṇḍa per day for ten days after the funeral. In Utt.K. these piṇḍa offerings are accompanied by daily water libations[16]. The libations, consisting of kuśa grass, water and sesame seeds are offered in the Southern direction with the words,"Be gratified, be gratified with this piṇḍa, O preta of gotra NN. Let this water reach you"[17]. According to Utt.K. the number of handfuls of water (añjali) offered can vary from one per day up to a total of a hundred for the ten day period[18].

According to Sār. the daily offering should be made on a purified area at a sacred bathing place, a well or a tank, in a garden or in a temple and should be performed between nine and twelve noon[19]. The ball should be prepared in the name of the departed[20] and offered flowers, incense, perfumes etc.[21]. The

[16] 5:21; 15:61-2; 34:45

[17] Utt.K. 4:74-7

[18] 5:21-3

[19] 11:25

[20] Sar. 11:28

gifts are offered to the deceased just by his personal or family name and without mantras[22]. They must be offered without crying or coughing for the ghost has to consume the tears and the phlegm of those mourners who cough or cry[23]. The performer discards the clothes worn for the śrāddha after returning home[24] and must bathe before he can eat[25].

If piṇḍas and libations are not given the deceased permanently remains an airborne ghost tormented by hunger and thirst[26]. The piṇḍa offerings are said to create a new body (piṇḍaja) for the deceased which unites with the air body (vāyuja)[27]. The Utt.K. versions of the formation of the body differ slightly in their accounts of which organ is formed on which day[28], but all agree that the body is completed by the tenth day offering, which creates hunger. In addition to the ten piṇḍas offered on the ten days Utt.K. also refers to a set of six śrāddhas, offered on the first, third, fifth, seventh, ninth and eleventh days, which it refers to as nava śrāddhas[29]. In Utt.K.

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21 Utt.K. 5:27; Sār. 11:29

22 Utt.K. 15:53,68

23 Utt.K. 4:80; 15:58; Sār. 11:4

24 Utt.K. 34:42

25 Sār. 11:42

26 Utt.K. 34:142

27 Utt.K. 10:82-3

28 5:33-7; 15:69-71; 34:48-51

29 5:71; 34:36

chapter five another set of śrāddhas is mentioned. This series of nine śrāddhas is offered at the place of death, on the way to the cremation ground, at the bone collection and on the fifth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh days.

The piṇḍas offered during the ten days are not solely for the deceased; according to Utt.K. each of the ten daily piṇḍas performs four functions[30]. Two parts go towards constructing the deceased's new body, one part nourishes him and the remaining part appeases Yama's servants[31]. Yama's servants are said to be those who have no descendants (to offer them gifts), who, having spent several years in hell, are allowed to run errands for Yama and share in the food and drink that mourners offer to their dead relatives[32].

The explanation for the piṇḍas offered during the first ten days in the ethnographic accounts of brahminical communities agrees with that given in the textual material. While the nava śrāddha is purely a brahmin-feeding rite in the ethnography (Eth.4c), in the textual material it is included among the piṇḍa ceremonies. The ambiguous status of the deceased is demonstrated by the fact that although the śrāddha for the deceased is performed at a sacred place and on a purified area, the performer must discard his clothes and bathe when he returns home. The

[30] 5:31; 15:65

[31] 5:32; 15:66

[32] Utt.K. 18:34-5

inauspicious nature of the ceremony is shown by the statement that the śrāddha is performed without mantras.

Utt.K. appears to combine inconsistent views about the state of the ghost during the ten days in that although it ceases to inhabit the air-body after the third day (G.P.4b) and does not feel hunger in its new body until the tenth day, one quarter of each daily piṇḍa is said to be for its sustenance.

In Sār. the six piṇḍas offered before and during the funeral and the ten offered during the first ten days to form the new body comprise a set known as the sixteen impure śrāddhas[33]. The picture in Utt.K., however, is far more confusing. Of its three different versions of the series of six piṇḍas[34] (G.P.1e) the chapter thirty-five account states that they are added to the ten piṇḍas offered over ten days in order to form a series of sixteen śrāddhas as in Sār.. In the chapter thirty-four account of the śrāddhas performed during the first ten days no reference is made to this set of six but a series of sixteen is constructed from the piṇḍas offered during the first ten days and the nava śrāddhas performed on the odd numbered days of this period. In chapter five piṇḍas offered at the place of death, on the way to the funeral ground, at the bone collection and on the fifth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh day after death form a set of nine śrāddhas and no reference is made to the ten piṇḍas

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[33] 12:59

[34] 4:48-9; 15:30-31; 35:33-34

offered over ten days to form the body[35]. The confusion in Utt.K. is probably the result of the inclusion of a number of variant traditions. The general pattern seems to be of sixteen śrāddhas (ten of which are the piṇḍa offerings which form the body), to match the set of sixteen which form the ṣoḍaśaka series (G.P.4e).

4e. The Ekoddiṣṭa And The Ṣoḍaśaka Śrāddha.

On the tenth day the piṇḍa offering is either accompanied by or made of meat[36], for which, according to Sār., may be substituted a ball of māṣa (a type of bean), since flesh is forbidden in the Kali Yuga. Utt.K. states that the deceased is extremely hungry after assuming his new piṇḍa body and cannot be appeased unless he is offered meat[37]. The tenth day piṇḍa is offered without mantras[38], but according to Sār. on the eleventh a further piṇḍa is offered to the deceased, this time accompanied by mantras[39]. The offering is far more elaborate than those performed during the first ten days and in addition to a kuśa grass figure[40] the chief mourner sets up a gold image of Viṣṇu, a

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[35] 5:67-9

[36] Utt.K. 15:72; Sār. 11:37

[37] 15:73

[38] Sār. 12:5

[39] ibid.

[40] Sār. 12:11 (Abegg p.159 fn. interprets kauśikam as referring to the kuśa grass figure of a brahmin which is set up in the daily rites for the first ten days).

silver image of Brahmā, a copper image of Rudra and an iron image of Yama[41].

Both texts refer to a series of sixteen *śrāddhas* which they refer to as the *madhya ṣoḍaśaka* (middle sixteen), to be performed on the eleventh day. Sixteen *piṇḍas* are offered: eleven to the deceased plus a series of nine deities, with Viṣṇu being offered a *piṇḍa* at the beginning and end of the series[42]. The five final *piṇḍas* of the *ṣoḍaśaka* are offered to the five deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Yama and Puruṣa. According to Utt.K. this *madhya ṣoḍaśaka* anticipates the final series of sixteen offered during the twelve months after death[43] and in conjunction with the twelfth day ceremonies enables the deceased to eat his fill[44].

According to the texts the new body should conclude with a meat offering, a feature which does not appear in the ethnographic accounts of the Hindu communities. In post-Vedic culture although vegetarianism came to represent the ideal diet for maintaining ritual purity, meat eating was associated with building up great physical strength, hence the tradition of meat eating among *kṣatriyas*. Utt.K.'s explanation for the flesh offering suggests that only meat has the ability to assuage the hunger of a being who has, according to the theory of building

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[41] Sār. 12:6

[42] Utt.K. 5:38; Sār. 12:60-2

[43] 34:53

[44] 15:74-5

the *piṇḍa* body, starved since the third day after the funeral (G.P.4b). Sār. seems to represent an intermediate position between Utt.K. and the ethnography, acknowledging that flesh should be given on the tenth day but providing a vegetarian alternative and stating that meat is forbidden in the Kali Yuga age. It seems that although the Vedic practice of meat offerings persisted into the vegetarian culture in this context because of beliefs about the terrible hunger of the ghost, this practice too, in time, succumbed to the vegetarian ideal and came to be replaced by the ritual in which a brahmin is fed or eats a rice *piṇḍa* on behalf of the deceased to assuage the dead man's terrible hunger (Eth.4e).

In the ethnography the *piṇḍa* ceremony during the first ten days may include offerings to Yama and Rudra while on the eleventh day a *piṇḍa* is offered to the deceased alone (Eth.4e). In the textual material the opposite appears to be the case, with the simple *śrāddha* form being used on the first ten days and a more elaborate form being used on the eleventh day, when the deceased has attained his new body.

Although the series of sixteen offerings in the texts is made to the deceased in the company of various deities, the Utt.K. description of them as anticipating the sixteen offerings made during the rest of the year suggests that as in the ethnographic accounts of the *ṣoḍaśaka* (Eth.4e) they are in fact intended to provide for the deceased on his journey before his transition to Ancestor on the twelfth day. This is supported by

Caland[45] (G.P.5c), who argues that where the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam was performed immediately after the end of pollution, it was preceded by a series of sixteen offerings corresponding with sixteen halts made on the year long journey to the kingdom of Yama. Utt.K.'s statement that these offerings anticipate the sixteen offerings made during the year after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam refers to the fact that although the year long journey of the deceased is observed in ritual during the compressed time of twelve days, the journey is still observed during the literal period which it takes to complete and the sixteen offerings made on the eleventh day are repeated at their appropriate times during the year.

4f. Gift Of The Necessities Of Life.

Both texts refer to gifts of the necessities of life to be made to a brahmin on behalf of the deceased. This gift consists of the deceased's clothing and personal possessions, a bed and toilet articles appropriate to the sex of the dead person and the pada dānas (gifts for the journey).

Sār. and Utt.K. state that the gift of the deceased's possessions should be made on the eleventh day[46]. Sār. refers to two bed offerings, one made on the eleventh day and the other made after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam on the twelfth day[47]. Utt.K. appears to refer to only one bed offering to be made either

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[45] T.V. 24f.

[46] Utt.K. 34:84-6,93-4; Sār. 13:82

[47] Sār. 12:17; 13:58

before death[48], on the eleventh day[49] or on the twelfth day after death[50]. The bed described in both texts is extremely sumptuous, made of fine wood[51], covered and canopied with fine cloths[52] and with pillows stuffed with swansdown[53]. In the Utt.K. account and the Sār. description of the bed offering to be made after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, the chief mourner sets up gold images of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī, and worships them with the words,"Just as, O Kṛṣṇa, your bed is the ocean of milk may this likewise not be empty in my future births[54]". The bed and toilet articles are then given to the brahmin[55]. The procedure described in Sār. for the eleventh day bed offering differs in that instead of the representations of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī the son places a golden image of the deceased on the bed and offers the gift with the words,"This bed is given by me to you, o brahmin, for the sake of the departed, and so are the other things"[56]. The gift of the bed is said to enable the deceased to reach the highest condition[57],

[48] 34:72

[49] 34:82

[50] 18:10

[51] Utt.K. 34:73; Sār. 13:60

[52] Utt.K. 34:73; Sār. 13:60

[53] Sār. 13:61

[54] Utt.K. 34:80-1; Sār. 13:71

[55] Utt.K. 34:82; Sār. 13:73

[56] Sār. 12:18

[57] Sār. 12:20

freeing him from the bondage of actions and ensuring his stay in heaven until the end of the age[58].

The texts also mention the gift of such items as an umbrella, shoes, a signet ring, a water jar, a seat and vessels in connection with the gift of the bed[59]. These items are referred to as pada dāna (gifts for the journey) and accompany the gift of the bed. In Sār. they are given with the bed offering made after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, while the first bed offering is accompanied by the eight last gifts, if they have not been offered before death, and the deceased's personal possessions. The umbrella is said to protect the deceased from the terrible heat on his journey to Yama's kingdom[60]. The gift of the shoes is said to enable him to pass on horseback over the thorns on the way and the sword-edged forest[61]. The gift of clothes propitiates the servants of Yama according to Utt.K.[62], while in Sār. it is said to ensure protection for the deceased from the heat and wind[63]. By the gift of a ring Yama's messengers vanish and cease to trouble the deceased[64]. The gift of the seat and the water vessels enables the deceased to travel the path at his leisure

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[58] Utt.K. 34:88-9

[59] Utt.K. 18:16; Sār. 13:87

[60] Utt.K. 18:16; Sār. 13:82

[61] Utt.K. 4:21; 18:18; Sār. 13:88

[62] 4:23; 18:22

[63] 13:87

[64] Utt.K. 18:23; Sār. 13:90

with plenty of provisions, water and a seat to sit on[65]. In its accounts of eleventh day rites Utt.K. also refers to the gift of a boat made of sugar cane which is said to enable the deceased to cross the Vaitaraṇī[66], while Sār. includes the gift of a cow among its eleventh day ceremonies.

The descriptions of the gift of the necessities of life and the explanations for this practice in the ethnographic accounts of the brahminical communities correspond closely with the textual material. There is no evidence for this ceremony in the accounts of Vedic ritual and it seems to be a Purāṇic addition to the funeral ceremonies. The textual explanations for the pada dānas are of the same sort as those given for the eight or ten last gifts (G.P.1c) and a close connection between the two series of offerings can be seen in the way that Sār. allows the eight last gifts to be given either before death or with the first bed offering, where they perform the same function as the pada dānas in the second bed offering. There seems to be some repetition of pre-death rites in the gift of a cow and the sugar cane boat, which is said to enable the deceased to cross the river Vaitaraṇī. The idea that pre-death ceremonies and the rites at the end of primary pollution are both appropriate contexts in which to give the Vaitaraṇī cow can also be seen in the ethnography, in which communities may offer the cow before death

[65] Utt.K. 4:22; 18:19-20; Sār. 13:91,93

[66] 14:38-41

or at the end of primary pollution or, as in Sār., perform the ceremony on both occasions.

It is interesting that both texts mention that a brahmin should be given the deceased's personal possessions. This custom is seen in the account of the Śreṣṭhas of Nepal (Eth.4f) but nowhere else in the ethnography. The general treatment of Mahābrāhmans, who receive the gift of the bed in the ethnography (Eth.4f), suggests that where receiving even new goods on behalf of the ghost is considered sufficiently polluting for it to be necessary to engage an outsider, the acceptance of the deceased's personal effects is probably considered so polluting that, despite the textual instructions, few brahmins are willing to accept such gifts.

The description of the type of bed to be offered is undoubtedly an idealised account, and as in the case of the last gifts (G.P.1c), the details are merely intended to encourage people to make the offering as lavish as they can afford. The repetition of the gift of the bed may be due to a desire to increase its benefit for the deceased and it may also represent an attempt to increase the financial gains of brahmins connected with funeral rites by requiring that one of the most costly gifts of the funeral ceremonies be offered twice. It seems likely that the primary purpose of the second bed offering, however, as in the ethnography (Eth.4f), is to ensure that the family priest, who cannot receive gifts during the period of primary pollution benefits from one of the richest ceremonial presents that a

family ever gives, accepting after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam a duplicate of the offering made to a Mahābrāhman before the rite of transfer and the end of primary pollution. The gift of the bed not only ensures contentment for the deceased in the world beyond but also acts as a symbol of fertility. The accompanying mantra asks that the deceased should always have a wife in future rebirths and thus asks for the cycle of regeneration to continue unbroken.

Although in the ethnography the brahmin receiving the gifts is strongly identified with the ghost and by the Chitpāvans (Eth.4f) is actually said to be the preta, the textual material does not make this direct connection; Utt.K. instead describes a process whereby gifts offered on behalf of the dead person go to Varuṇa, who hands them to Garuḍa, who in turn hands them to Bhāskara (the sun god), from whom the deceased receives them[67].

4g. Release Of The Bull.

According to both texts the ceremony of vṛṣotsarga (bull release) should be performed on the eleventh day[68]. They also mention that it may be performed during Kārttika or another auspicious month[69] on the twelfth day of either the bright or dark lunar fortnight[70]. According to Utt.K. it can be performed only after a person's death[71]. A bull decorated with good clothes

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[67] 18:27

[68] Utt.K. 5:40; Sār. 12:21-30

[69] Utt.K. 6:18; Sār. 12:44

[70] Utt.K. 14:19-21; Sār. 12:44

[71] 5:43

and ornaments[72] is married to one or four heifers[73], which are adorned in a similar fashion[74], with the wedding mantras and appropriate auspicious rites[75]. The chief mourner then performs various homas to the planets and the gods. After worshipping the bull and placing a cakra on its left flank and a trident on its right flank[76] he releases it with the words,"O bull, thou art dharma created by Brahmā in the form of a bull. On account of your being released, give help over this ocean of existence"[77] or with the mantra,"You are dharma in the form of a bull, the delight of the whole world. You are aṣṭa mūrti ('eight formed' of the five elements, sun, moon and sacrificial priest), hence give me peace. Drink and eat grass in the antarvedi of Gangā and Yamunā. O bull, you should speak about my good deeds before Dharmarāja"[78]. If a live bull cannot be used then the ceremony should be performed using a bull made of darbha and piṣṭa (dough) or mud and grass[79]. It is said that unless a bull release is performed the deceased remains a ghost however many śrāddhas are

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[72] Utt.K. 14:25; 41:10

[73] Utt.K. 6:16-17; 41:2; Sār. 12:38

[74] Utt.K. 5:43; 41:10

[75] Utt.K. 6:16-17; 41:3; Sār. 12:38

[76] Utt.K. 14:36; Sār. 12:40

[77] Utt.K. 14:27; Sār. 12:42

[78] Utt.K. 6:22-6

[79] Utt.K. 5:44-45

performed for him[80]. According to Sār. the vṛṣotsarga achieves release for the Ancestors of twenty-one generations[81] and in Utt.K. it is said that wherever the bull drinks water or digs earth with its horns, there enough food and water for the Ancestors exists[82]. The sixth chapter of Utt.K. contains several stories about the rewards received by the performer of the bull release, who goes straight to heaven[83] and achieves rebirth in a royal family[84].

There is no reference to a bull release ceremony as part of the Vedic śrāddha rites (Ved.4g). The Gṛhyasūtras do, however, refer to a bull release ceremony to be performed on the full moon day of Kārttika or on the day in which the moon stands in conjunction with the constellation of Revatī in the month of Āśvayuja[85]. The form of the ritual is virtually the same as that used in the Garuḍa Purāṇa but the bull and heifers are released with the words,"This young (bull) I give you as your husband; run about sporting with him, your lover. Do not bring down a curse upon us, by nature blessed ones. May we rejoice in increase of

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[80] Utt.K. 5:40,51; 6:1,14

[81] 12:33

[82] 14:52

[83] 6:136,143

[84] 6:121-2

[85] Śāṅkh.Gr.3,11; Pār.Gr.3,9

wealth and in comfort"[86]. Thus, as Hildebrandt[87] points out, the bull release was originally concerned with maintaining the fertility of the herds and hence the wealth and prosperity of the community. Later, however, the release of Ancestors was mentioned as one of the rewards to be gained from the bull release (e.g. Rāmacandra's Paddhati on Śāṅkh.Gr.3,11). Thus the release of the bull came to be associated with the release of the Ancestors and in Viṣṇu-Smṛti it is described among the śrāddha rites. The form of the ceremony is the same as that in the Vedic material except that the bull is released with the additional mantra,"Holy law (dharma) is a bull and is declared to have four feet: may I choose him for the object of my worship; may he protect me wholly"[88]. The Smṛti adds that wherever the bull drinks at a pool, the entire pool will refresh the Ancestors of the man who set the bull at liberty[89], and wherever the ground is dug up by the bull it is converted into delicious food and drink to satisfy the Ancestors[90]. By the time of the G.P. the bull release seems to have made the transition from being a regularly performed śrāddha ceremony to being an ekoddiṣṭa rite (although traces of its earlier general application remain in the statements about its being performed during Kārttika or some

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[86] Śāṅkh.Gr.3,11,14; Pār.Gr.3,9,6

[87] p.85

[88] 86:15

[89] 86:19

[90] 86:20

other auspicious month) and the accompanying mantras make no reference to the heifers sporting with their lover the bull. What was originally a fertility rite has been transformed into an ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha rite, and although the marriage part of the ritual survives the participants in the ethnography ignore it in their explanations of the bull release and instead follow the ideas found in the G.P. mantras (Eth.4g). In addition to ideas about the bull ceremony effecting the release of Ancestors and bearing witness to the righteousness of the deceased and the donor at the court of Yama, Utt.K. also contains the concept that the bull eats and drinks on behalf of the Ancestors, an idea which is also seen in the Viṣṇu-Smṛti account. The reluctance to perform this rite which can be seen in the ethnography may have already been present at the time of the compilation of Utt.K., hence the inclusion of the edifying stories in chapter six about the rewards which one might expect from performing a bull release.

4h. The End Of Primary Pollution.

According to the texts, at the end of the tenth day the son and other relatives should shave[91]. Utt.K. states that the chief mourner and relatives should discard their old clothes and take a bath outside the village[92]. According to Sār. the chief mourner precedes the eleventh day śrāddha with the performance of the sāṃdhya (the morning rituals which the twice-born are required to

[91] Utt.K. 5:28-9; Sār. 11:37

[92] 5:27-8

perform each day) and other ceremonies[93]. The texts state that the end of primary pollution varies according to varṇa; for a brahmin it lasts ten days, for a kṣatriya twelve days, for a vaiśya fifteen days and for a śūdra a month[94]. Sār. also states, however, in chapter thirteen that in the Kali Age the period of primary pollution at death should be ten days for all castes[95]. At the end of primary pollution brahmin mourners should purify themselves by touching water, kṣatriyas by touching a vehicle, vaiśyas by touching a goad or whip and śūdras by touching a stick[96].

The end of primary pollution is marked by the mourners bathing, shaving and putting on new clothes, as in the ethnography (Eth.4h), and Sār. also mentions, for the first time, the chief mourner preceding his morning śrāddha with the performance of his normal daily rites. The lessening of the mourners' pollution is accompanied by a change of ritual attitude towards the deceased. During the period of the first ten days the rituals are highly inauspicious and the piṇḍas for the deceased are offered without mantras but on the eleventh day the chief mourner makes his offering to the deceased with mantras (G.P.4d) indicating that the deceased has become less inauspicious24.

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[93] 12:4

[94] Utt.K. 34:64-5; Sār. 11:6

[95] 13:19

[96] Utt.K. 5:28

Although Utt.K. claims that the period of primary pollution varies according to varṇa it does not describe what happens between the offerings on the first ten days and the end of impurity in the case of those varṇas which are said to be impure for more than ten days. The matter of primary pollution is further complicated by the fact that both texts insist that the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam is to be performed by all varṇas on the twelfth day after death (G.P.5c). The problem encountered in the Utt.K. material is not found in Sār., which offers the variable length of pollution as an ideal but states that in the Kali Age death impurity occupies a standard period of ten days for all the varṇas. The ethnography corresponds with the Sār. account in that caste Hindus as well as brahmins tend to observe ten days of primary pollution (Eth.4h).

Stage 5. The End Of Mourning.

5a. The Caste Feast.

According to Sār. brahmins, caṇḍālas and outcastes should be feasted with pleasant sweetened foods on the day of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam[1].

The textual material corresponds with the ethnographic accounts of caste Hindus and brahmins in which the feast is only one of several end of mourning ceremonies and appears to be held after the rite which transfers the deceased to the status of Ancestor (Eth.5a). The fact that outcastes are here included in the feast suggests that one of the functions it performs is that of an almsgiving ceremony to boost the deceased's merit, a feature which does not appear in the ethnography, where the final feast is for the caste fellows of the deceased plus brahmins.

5b. Recalling The Spirit.

The low caste and tribal practice of recalling the spirit of the deceased to the house where he died (Eth.5b) is not mentioned in the G.P..

5c. Piṇḍa Ceremonies.

The transfer from ghost to Ancestor is accomplished by means of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam ceremony. The sapiṇḍīkaraṇam may be performed on the twelfth day, after three fortnights, after six months or after a year[2]. Both texts state, however, that all

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[1] 13:56,94-5

[2] Utt.K. 5:53-4; 26:14-15; Sār. 13:28

castes should perform this rite on the twelfth day after death because of the endless variety of conditions in the Kali Yuga[3], the brevity of human life[4] and the number of family obligations[5].

According to Utt.K. the chief mourner performs the sapindīkaranam using four vessels and pindas. One of the vessels is for the ghost while the other three are for the Ancestors[6]. The performer sprinkles the Ancestor vessels with water from the ghost's pot and then offers the four pindas with libations[7]. According to Sār. the chief mourner offers three pindas in order to his grandfather and others in the form of Vasu, Rudra and Arka and gives the fourth pinda to the deceased[8]. He worships them with incense etc. and then divides the ghost's pinda into three parts with a thin bar of gold, mixing them with the three pindas given to the others[9]. The Pūrvakhanda[10], however, differs from both these accounts in that although there are three vessels and three pindas for the father, grandfather and great-grandfather of the deceased, the dead person's pinda is divided into two rather than three and united with the pindas of the father and

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[3] Sār. 13:28

[4] Utt.K. 5:54; Sār. 13:30

[5] Utt.K. 26:15

[6] 5:57

[7] 5:57-8

[8] 13:37

[9] 13:38-9

[10] Pūrv.K. 220:3f

grandfather, and similarly only the water from the father and grandfather's vessels is united with that of the deceased.

At the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam the deceased makes the transition from ghost to Ancestor[11]. Until the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam is performed the family remains impure[12] and no auspicious ceremony may be celebrated[13]. Both texts mention a series of sixteen piṇḍa offerings to be made to the deceased alone after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam in the year following the death and Utt.K. claims that these should be ekoddiṣṭa rites[14]. According to Sār. ekoddiṣṭa rites can not be performed beyond the end of the year and the performer who does so destroys his forefathers[15]. The third ṣoḍaśaka consists of twelve monthly piṇḍa offerings, an offering at six months, offerings on the first and second fortnights after death and an offering made either on the third fortnight[16] or just before the offering of the twelfth month[17]. Both texts give detailed accounts of the twelve month long journey and the tortures which the deceased suffers at the hands of Yama's servants[18] if he has sinned during his lifetime. Each

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[11] Utt.K. 5:58; 26:10; Sār. 13:2

[12] Utt.K. 26:12; Sār. 13:4

[13] Utt.K. 26:11

[14] 5:76

[15] 13:107

[16] Utt.K. 5:49

[17] Sār. 12:65

[18] Utt.K. 5:99f. 16:10f. Sār.2

of the sodaśaka offerings corresponds to a halt at a city along the way, where the deceased is allowed to consume the pinda and libation offered by his relatives.

The statements in G.P., unlike in the ethnography, appear to be ritually inconsistent in that they contain a series of offerings meant to be for the ghost on his way to the Kingdom of Yama, which are offered after he has become an Ancestor through the rite of sapindīkaranam. The Sūtra and Smrti sources contain several traditions about the correct time for the inclusion of the deceased among the Ancestors ranging from the eleventh day[19] to a year after death[20], this latter appearing to be the norm for the majority. According to those sources which specifiy a sapindīkaranam a year after death twelve monthly ekoddista śrāddhas are performed starting on the eleventh day after death and ending on the anniversary of death (Ved.5c). In later sources there are still various traditions about the date for the sapindīkaranam, but the twelve monthly offerings of the earlier accounts were increased to sixteen by the addition of a śrāddha after three fortnights (in some sources this is replaced by the sapindīkaranam in the list of sixteen), another preceding the offering on the day of death in the sixth month and the last on

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[19] Pār.Gr.3:10:48

[20] Śāṅkh.Gr. 4:2:7; Āgn.Gr. 3:10:3; Jai.Gr. 2:5; Vai.Gr. 4:7; 5:7; 5:13; Visnu-Smrti 31:11-12

the day which precedes the anniversary of death[21]. The importance of the series of twelve or sixteen monthly offerings was such that, according to Caland[22], even when the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam was performed immediately at the end of pollution the monthly offerings were nevertheless still performed. In some sources they were compressed into the twelve days preceding the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam with one śrāddha being offered per day except on the first, sixth and twelfth day, when there were two śrāddhas in order to make the total up to sixteen[23]. Caland argues[24] that where the monthly ceremonies were compressed into the period immediately preceding the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam they would also have been repeated after the rite of transfer at their appropriate times. These repetitions, however, would not have taken the form of the ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas performed before the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam but would have been anniversary style ceremonies (pratyābdikavat [or -vad]: ekoddiṣṭa ceremonies in the sense that they are for the deceased alone, but following the pārvaṇa śrāddha in that they are preceded by an offering to the Viśve Devas and that they do not address the deceased as preta[25]). Other sources did not have anticipatory

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[21] e.g. Gobhila Śrāddhakalpa 3:13; Likhita D.S. 2:376:10; Chandogapariśista (on Ghob. 1:1); Kātyāyana 24:8; Āśv.Gr.Par. 3:9. (See Caland T.V. p.25-6)

[22] T.V. p.27f.

[23] T.V. p.28 fn.

[24] T.V. p.28

[25] See Gar.6c for discussion on a monthly ceremony completely modeled on the pārvaṇa śrāddha.

śrāddhas but performed the sixteen śrāddhas in the year after death using the form of anniversary ceremonies rather than true ekoddiṣṭa offerings[26]. In other sources the monthly śrāddhas were performed in a compressed rite on the eleventh day and were followed by the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam on the twelfth day[27]. The G.P. version has features of both the first and third of these patterns with sixteen anticipatory offerings on the eleventh day (G.P.4e) followed by a twelfth day sapiṇḍīkaraṇam and a further series of sixteen monthly offerings made in the year after death. The apparent ritual contradiction in G.P. is removed if the ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas which follow the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam take the form of anniversary ceremonies, in which the deceased is treated as an Ancestor rather than as a ghost.

The importance of the monthly offerings probably stems from their connection with ideas about the fate of the deceased after death. Originally these monthly offerings were thought to sustain the ghost on his journey to the world of the Ancestors (the moon), as seen in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and Chāndogya Upaniṣads[28], where the spirits of dead householders are said to travel from the flame of the pyre into the day and from there into the half month of the waxing moon, thence into the six months during which

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[26] Kātyāyana (on Ghobila Śr.K. 3:13); Ghobilapariśiṣṭa (ibid); Gālava (ibid); Kārṣṇājini (ibid); Kātyāyana 24:12-13; Bṛhatparāśara D.S. 2:176; Śāṅkhāyana D.S. 2:374:12; Paiṭhīnasi (on Gobh. 1:1). (See Caland T.V. p.28-9 fn.)

[27] e.g. Nārāyaṇa at the end of Āśv.Gr.; likewise Āśv.Gr.Par. 3:11 (See Caland fn. p.29-30).

[28] Bṛ.Up. 6:2:4-16; Chān.Up 5:10:1-10

the sun moves northward, after which the deceased reaches his destination. By the time of the Garuḍa Purāṇic accounts this idea has been replaced by the theory that the deceased travels for twelve months to Yama's court, where he is judged according to his past deeds and allotted a rebirth appropriate to his karma[29], with the sixteen offerings found in the later material corresponding to sixteen halts on the way. Thus, in theory the deceased only reaches the world of the Ancestors/kingdom of Yama after a year-long journey during which he must be supplied with sustenance appropriate to a ghost. It would appear from the reasons given by Utt.K. and Sār. for the early performance of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam that following the real time-scale placed the mourning family in considerable difficulties if they wanted to hold an auspicious event such as a marriage or if the chief mourner died before the dead person could be admitted among the Ancestors. It seems that from early times the necessary rites to feed the deceased on his journey could be operated on a reduced time-scale so that in ritual time the deceased's journey could be compressed into twelve or thirteen days although according to scriptural theory his journey still literally took twelve months. In G.P. the displacement of the ritual time-scale from the real time-scale results in a set of sixteen monthly offerings compressed into the eleventh day and a repetition of this series of monthly offerings following the literal time-scale of twelve months. The displacement of ritual time from real time causes an

[29] Utt.K. 5:147-9; 10:88-9

anomalous situation in which the offerings made on the real time-scale for the ghost on his journey must be offered to him as an Ancestor since in ritual terms his transfer of status has already been effected during the ceremonies operating on the reduced time-scale.

In the ethnography the monthly śrāddhas correspond with Caland's third pattern and are made in the compressed ritual time only, thus avoiding the tensions created in G.P.. The anomalous situation created by the displacement of ritual time from literal time is still present, however, though less obvious, in the daily offerings to a brahmin for a year after death (G.P.5d).

The general form of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam ceremony seen in the ethnography (Eth.5c) corresponds with that described in the Puranic accounts: the rite of transfer is accomplished by the merging of piṇḍas and water from a pot representing the deceased is mixed with that in vessels representing the three Ancestors. The ethnographic accounts of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, however, are all of a three-fold merging and there is no evidence of the practice of two-fold merging as seen in Purv.K.. According to Sār. the piṇḍas are not addressed as the three immediate Ancestors but as the three classes of Vedic deities Vasus, Rudras, and Ādityas/Arkaḥ (both terms for the sun). According to Manu[30] the three Ancestors of a man i.e. his father, paternal grandfather and paternal great-grandfather are respectively to be identified with the three orders of superintending deities Vasus, Rudras and

[30] 3:284

Ādityas when performing śrāddha. Yaj.[31] states that these are the deities of the śrāddhas and being gratified by śrāddha give satisfaction to the Ancestors of human beings. The fact that the piṇḍas representing the three Ancestors do so only through the agency of the superintending pitṛ deities is extremely important in theories about how the spirits of the Ancestors, in a cyclical universe, are capable of enjoying the essence of rice-balls fifty to a hundred years after their deaths (G.P.6c).

5d. Ceremonies Using A Representation Of The Deceased.

In Pūrv.K.'s account[32] of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, the performer invites a Viśve Deva brahmin (brahmin to represent the gods), a brahmin to represent the deceased and three brahmins to represent the three Ancestors and during the course of the ceremony these brahmins are fed and worshipped on behalf of those whom they represent. The brahmin representing the deceased is also given the water from the ghost vessel after that of the grand-father and great-grandfather has been poured into it (G.P.5d).

According to Utt.K. and Sār.[33] the performer offers a brahmin the gift of maintenance for a year during the course of or after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam. Both texts describe a gift of twelve vārdhanīs (vessels) filled with cooked food and water which are offered to a group of brahmins on the day of the rite of

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[31] 1:268

[32] Pūrv.K. 22o:2-10

[33] Utt.K. 26:36; Sār. 13:52-3

transfer[34], and Utt.K. also describes a gift of sixteen vessels filled with cooked black gram and water which is given to sixteen brahmins[35]. In addition to these rites Utt.K. states that a brahmin should be offered a daily gift of a vārdhanī filled with food and water, starting on the eleventh day after death and continuing for a year[36]. According to Utt.K. these gifts of food and water satiate and please the dead on their way to Yama's abode[37].

Purv.K.'s use of brahmins in the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam ceremony corresponds with the accounts of brahmin communities in the ethnography and with the Vedic material (Eth.5c, Ved.5c). It is assumed, however, that a brahmin will represent the ghost, unlike in the ethnography, where the inauspicious and polluting ghost may be represented by a bundle of grass rather than by a brahmin.

Both Utt.K. and Sār. reinforce the piṇḍa ceremonies with food offerings through a different channel by providing a single brahmin, who is clearly meant to represent the deceased, with provisions for a year. In Sār. this ceremony occurs only within the offerings of the reduced time-scale, but in Utt.K. it is repeated in the literal time-scale: a brahmin is given food and water each day for a year after death. The deceased is also fed

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[34] Utt.K. 37:5-7; Sār. 13:56

[35] 37:10

[36] Utt.K. 37:12

[37] 37:4,6

on his journey by a third method: a group of brahmins is offered twelve or sixteen pots of food and water. The twelve pots correspond with the number of months for which the deceased travels while the sixteen pots correspond with the number of piṇḍa offerings he receives on the way. In both texts these offerings are confined to the journey on the reduced time-scale. The representation of the deceased by brahmins at the rite of transfer is rare in the ethnography (Eth.5d), since it appears that few brahmins are willing to undertake such an inauspicious and polluting role. A brahmin is, however, often offered provisions on a daily or monthly basis during the year after death (Eth.5d). The status of the brahmin receiving such gifts is technically ambiguous: in ritual terms he is eating on behalf of an Ancestor and is therefore taking part in an inauspicious but unpolluting ceremony, but in scriptural terms he is eating on behalf of the ghost making his way to Yama's court. The ethnographic accounts, however, contain no evidence that the recipient of these daily gifts is viewed or treated with the same contempt as are those who represent the ghost during the final ceremonies and there would appear to be little awareness of the fact that the recipient of the daily gifts technically represents the ghost as well as the Ancestor.

5e. Opening The Gates Of Heaven.

The Purānic material makes no reference to such a rite.

Stage 6. Memorial Ceremonies.

6a. Memorials.

The Garuḍa Purāṇic texts contain no instructions about the installation of memorials for the dead.

6b. Ceremonies For Reborn Ancestors.

According to the texts the Ancestors, after spending the appropriate time in heaven or hell, are reborn in forms appropriate to their karma[1], but there is no reference to any ceremony whereby a family ascertains the identity of the Ancestor who has been reborn into the family in the form of a new child.

6c. Anniversary Ceremonies For Individual Ancestors.

Both texts mention the performance of annual memorial ceremonies for the deceased starting on the first anniversary of the death. According to one reference in Utt.K. ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas should be performed every year[2]. In the Pūrvakhaṇḍa an annual ekoddiṣṭa ceremony is described, which has the same form as the pārvaṇa śrāddha in that it includes a brahmin to represent the Viśve Devas as well as an Ancestor brahmin, but differs in that the performer addresses and makes offerings to the deceased alone[3]. Elsewhere, however, Utt.K. states that the ekoddiṣṭa rites should not be performed after the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam and goes on to say that if they are performed they should be done for the

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[1] Utt.K. 3:78-84, 87-90

[2] 8:4

[3] 220:7-8

three generation of Ancestors[4]. According to Sār., after one year one should always offer three piṇḍas (i.e. to three generations), for by offering only one piṇḍa the performer becomes the destroyer of his forefathers[5]. In chapter 45 Utt.K. states that the annual śrāddha should be of the pārvaṇa type (i.e. for three Ancestors) if either the son or the father maintain or maintained sacrificial fires, so long as the son is aurasa (a legitimate son) or kṣetraja (procreated in one's wife by another man)[6]. Other grades of son (e.g. saṅgṛhīta: adopted sons) may only perform ekoddiṣṭa and not pārvaṇa, except under special circumstances[7], and if such a son offers pārvaṇa śrāddha he makes himself and the Ancestors victims of Yama's wrath[8]. Ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas are also to be performed for women and for those who die sonless[9]. If brahmins are not available for the mother's śrāddha then eight noble and chaste women whose husbands are alive should be fed[10].

The Garuḍa Purāṇic material concerning the annual memorial ceremony is extremely confusing and it is not at all clear

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[4] 26:16-18

[5] 13:107

[6] 45:1-2

[7] Utt.K. 45:4-7

[8] Utt.K. 25:37-41

[9] Utt.K. 45:7

[10] Utt.K. 45:32

whether it is a rite for the deceased alone (ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha) or whether it is performed for the dead person in the company of the Ancestors (pārvaṇa śrāddha), and if the latter is the case whether annual pārvaṇa śrāddhas are held on behalf of the father and grandfather on their death anniversaries or whether the annual memorial for the father counts as the anniversary of the grandfather and the great-grandfather as well. Utt.K.'s statement about annual ekoddiṣṭa rites and the Pūrvakhaṇḍa description correspond with Caland's description of anniversary rites for the deceased alone, which differ from the ekoddiṣṭa rites of a funeral in that they incorporate certain features of the pārvaṇa śrāddha[11], preceding the rite with offerings to the Viśve Devas and not addressing the deceased as preta. Anniversary rites as seen in the ethnography also tend to be for the deceased alone, rather than for three generations of Ancestors (Eth.5c). In the case of the Chetris (caste Hindus) of Nepal[12] the three ascending generations are remembered in separate anniversary ekoddiṣṭas held for the father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

It would seem from Utt.K.'s statements in chapters 26 and 45 that the ideal memorial rite for the anniversary of an individual's death is the pārvaṇa śrāddha, a ceremony in which the deceased is worshipped and fed in the company of the performer's grandfather and great-grandfather. It is, however, open only to those who have maintained sacrificial fires and who

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[11] T.V. p.28

[12] Bennett p.111

have sons qualified to perform the śrāddha. The ekoddista śrāddha is to be performed only for those classes of people who do not qualify for pārvana śrāddha (e.g. women and those without sons). Caland makes no reference to pārvana śrāddha type anniversary ceremonies but, as he points out[13], textual references to anniversary ceremonies are brief. They would also appear to be ambiguous, since he translates Manu 3:248 as referring to an annual ekoddista ceremony in which a single pinda is offered with the rites described earlier for a three pinda offering to three Ancestors, while Bühler[14] takes it to refer to three pinda offerings as in the rite described earlier. There is also evidence to support this more elaborate style of anniversary offering in Thurston's account of Southern brahmins[15], which describes an annual ceremony for the deceased in which a ball of rice is offered to the pithru devatas (Ancestors of three generations). He also states that the monthly ceremonies for the year after death are of this type, indicating a pattern of offerings (not suggested by Caland) in which the śrāddhas for the deceased on his year-long journey after the twelfth day sapindīkaranam (G.P.5c) follow the pārvana śrāddha model and are offered to three generations. It seems likely that where the anniversary ceremony was for the deceased in the company of Ancestors it was performed only for the father, the one ceremony

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[13] T.V. p.31

[14] S.B.E. v.XXV p.121

[15] v.I p.304-5

covering all three generations; certainly Thurston makes no reference to separate anniversary ceremonies for the performer's grandfather and great-grandfather.

The Utt.K. statement in chapter 25 suggests that where ekoddiṣṭa rites were performed at anniversary ceremonies there was a tendency for the grandfather's and great-grandfather's separate anniversary ekoddiṣṭas to be omitted, for it urges the performance of ekoddiṣṭa rites for all three Ancestors, not just the performer's father. This interpretation corresponds with the ethnographic account of the Chetris (caste Hindus) of Nepal (Eth.6c), among whom the full anniversary śrāddha for the great-grandfather tends only to be practised by the wealthy and extremely orthodox.

Although Utt.K. mentions the pretapakṣa[16], it gives no further details of the śrāddhas to be performed during this time, so there is no reference to the performance of an anniversary ceremony for the individual during the Ancestor fortnight as described in many of the ethnographic accounts (Eth.6c).

6d.Ceremonies For All The Ancestors.

Utt.K. mentions a śrāddha for the Ancestors which is held on amāvāsyā (new moon) day and Pūrv.K. contains a description of the monthly pārvaṇa śrāddha[17]. The performer feeds a brahmin representing the Viśve Devas and a brahmin or brahmins representing the Ancestors. He makes offerings of piṇḍas and

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[16] 45:4-7

[17] 218:2-34

water to his father, grandfather and great-grandfather accompanied by their wives. He also performs offerings for his maternal grandfather, maternal great-grandfather and maternal great-great-grandfather[18]. Those family members who did not receive due cremation (i.e. who died untimely deaths or failed to have the correct rites performed for them) are also remembered in the offerings[19]. The performer wears the sacred thread in the auspicious direction for worshipping the Viśve Devas and their brahmin representative and in the inauspicious direction for worshipping the Ancestors and their brahmin representative[20].

Utt.K. also mentions *tarpaṇa* (libations)[21] and the performance of daily *śrāddhas* known as *nitya* or *deva śrāddhas*[22]. The *Pūrvakhaṇḍa* describes these as having the same form as the *pārvaṇa śrāddha* except that the arrangements for the Viśve Devas are slightly different[23]. According to Utt.K., however, several features to be seen in the *pārvaṇa śrāddha* can be omitted in the daily *śrāddha*, namely the *āvāhana* (invitation to the Ancestors), the *svadhākāra* (pronouncement of the benediction *svadhā*), *piṇḍas* and *agnaukaraṇa* (making sacrifices into the fire)[24].

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[18] 218:11,27

[19] 218:22

[20] 218:2-4

[21] 35:12

[22] 45:28

[23] 219:1

[24] 45:26-7

Utt.K. states that at the amāvāsyā śrāddha the Ancestors in aerial form wait to receive śrāddha at the threshold of their descendants' houses and remain there until sunset[25]. Even those who are in the hells are released by Yama at śrāddha time and being hungry run to the world of mortals to receive their offerings[26]. The Ancestors are said to eat food with the brahmins at śrāddhas[27], entering their bodies, taking their fill and then returning to their abodes[28]. Three generations can be satisfied by an Ancestor brahmin, for the father stays in the stomach, the grandfather on the left side and the great-grandfather on the right side of the brahmin recipient[29]. According to Utt.K., Ancestors have been seen attending the śrāddha ceremony. It relates a story that Sītā once saw her husband's father, grandfather and great-grandfather attend a śrāddha in the body of a brahmin[30]. According to Utt.K., worship of the Ancestors is more beneficial than worship of the deities[31], and in both Utt.K. and Sār. it is stated that śrāddha to the father blesses the performer with the birth of sons, the grandfather with cattle-

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[25] 10:51

[26] 10:28-30

[27] Utt.K. 10:25

[28] Utt.K. 10:26

[29] Utt.K. 10:27-30

[30] 10:32-49

[31] 10:59-9

wealth, the great-grandfather with riches and the great-great-grandfather with abundant food[32].

Utt.K. also addresses the problem of how reborn Ancestors can obtain satisfaction from śrāddhas. It argues that tradition declares that the śrāddha turns into food appropriate to the form the deceased has taken: nectar for a god, grass for an animal, blood for a ghost, an article of enjoyment for a child, etc., and that tradition has greater validity than direct perception[33]. It also claims that the śrāddhas reach the dead in their different forms through the agency of the Agniṣvāttapitṛs (a class of Ancestors), Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, the Viśve Devas and the Śrāddha Devas[34]. It claims that the śrāddha food seeks the dead person just as a calf searches for its mother lost in the herd[35].

It would appear from the ethnography that although G.P. advocates a monthly pārvaṇa śrāddha this practice is not followed by many communities (Eth.6d). Only one amāvāsyā śrāddha is commonly performed and that is the sarvapitṛ ceremony held during pitṛpakṣa (Eth.6d). It would therefore seem that in many communities the sarvapitṛ amāvāsyā has come to replace the śrāddhas for all the Ancestors which should ideally be offered every month during the year. As mentioned above (G.P.6c) Utt.K.

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[32] Utt.K. 25:11-12, Sār. 13:124-5

[33] 10:5,11

[34] 10:14,21-2

[35] 10:20

refers to the pretapakṣa but gives no details of ceremonies to be performed at this time, so there is no evidence in G.P. for a sarvapitṛ amāvāsyā. Neither does G.P. furnish any details about the Feast of Lamps (Eth.6d).

The Pūrvakhaṇḍa description of the nitya śrāddha is possibly somewhat idealized and Utt.K. sanctions a far less complex daily ritual. In the ethnographic accounts of brahminical communities the daily rituals for Ancestors appear to be even simpler, consisting only of tarpaṇa offerings.

Utt.K. poses the theoretical problem of what happens when an Ancestor is reborn before he passes out of the śrāddha ceremonies. It claims that the śrāddhas are distributed to the reborn Ancestor by means of intermediaries and that the offerings take on the character of foodstuffs appropriate to the deceased's new form. This problem, however, occupies a separate section in Utt.K. and descriptions of the śrāddha rites themselves always assume the presence of the dead relatives in the form of Ancestors. The myth of Sītā at the śrāddha ceremony in which she sees her husband's relatives suggests that this represents the popular view of śrāddha ceremonies. While Utt.K. acknowledges that an Ancestor may have been reborn before he passes out of the śrāddha ceremonies, theories about the mechanism of the śrāddha under these circumstances operate at rather an esoteric level and in practice it would appear that a relative is considered to attend every śrāddha held on his behalf in the form of an

Ancestor or, if he has led a wicked life or died an untimely death, in the form of a ghost.

6e. Ceremonies For Special Occasions And In Special Circumstances.

The Pūrvakhaṇḍa describes a vṛddhi śrāddha which is to be performed on joyous occasions such as the birth of a son[36]. The brahmins face east and the performer wears the sacred thread in the auspicious direction[37]. The performer touches his right knee and commences the ceremony with the statement,"Om, today on this joyous occasion, when śrāddha of our grandmother of N.N. gotra and of N.N. name has to be performed"[38]. He issues an invitation to his mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather etc. to attend[39]. The performer then makes offerings to brahmins representing the Viśve Devas. He gives a badara fruit (Jujube fruit) and curd to the grandmother with the words,"Om, o, nāndīmukhī of N.N. gotra, my grandmother, named N.N., here is food for you along with badara fruit and curd. Obeisance"[40]. He performs this offering similarly for the maternal grandfather and great-grandfather[41].

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[36] 219:2

[37] ibid.

[38] 219:3

[39] 219:4-5

[40] 219:6

[41] ibid.

As in the ethnography, the śrāddha for joyous occasions differs from the normal śrāddha ceremony in that the performer wears his thread in the auspicious direction, the Ancestor brahmins face east rather than south and the piṇḍas are replaced with festive foods (Eth.6e). Another interesting difference between the normal form of the śrāddha ceremony and that of the vṛddhi śrāddha is that whereas in the normal ceremony female Ancestors play a subsidiary role as wives (G.P.6d), here they appear to play the primary role. Although offerings are made to male Ancestors during the course of the ceremony, when the performer states his intentions at the start of the rite he says that the śrāddha is for his mother and grandmother. The emphasis on female Ancestors is possibly due to the fact that the joyous occasions on which vṛddhi śrāddhas are performed - marriages, the birth of a son etc.- are particularly important to women, effecting transfer from their natal to their husbands' lineages (Eth.5c).

6f. The Gayā Śrāddha.

Both the Pūrvakhaṇḍa and Sār. refer to the Gayā śrāddha. It is a ceremony which is held for the benefit of all the performer's Ancestors, although Sār. connects it with the funeral ceremony itself rather than with general śrāddha rites and states that if it is to be performed it should be done at the end of the year (i.e. a year after the death)[42]. In Pūrv.K. it is said that

[42] 13:109

<u>śrāddha</u> offered at Gayā is everlasting[43] and releases the performer from his obligations to the Ancestors[44]. <u>Śrāddha</u> at Gayā is said to enable twenty-one generations of Ancestors to achieve Brahma-loka[45]. According to Sār. the Ancestors are freed from the ocean of existence by the <u>śrāddha</u> at Gayā and go to the supreme state by the favour of Viṣṇu[46]. In Pūrv.K. it is stated that those who are in hell go to heaven and those who are in heaven attain liberation if <u>śrāddha</u> is offered for them at Gayā[47].

According to the <u>Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</u>[48], when an ascetic dies he achieves the Brahma-loka, from which he never returns. Vedic funeral rites for an ascetic[49] include no libations or offerings to the deceased because he has passed beyond saṃsāric needs and emotions. The householder, however, becomes an Ancestor, a class of being still within the saṃsāric cycle, and is said to go to the world of Ancestors (the moon), from whence he returns after a certain period of time and is reborn[50]. Vedic

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[43] 84:11,19,22-3

[44] 83:3,5,7,10,13,18,29,35; 84:14

[45] 83:15,21,25,28,31,63

[46] 13:110

[47] 84:30

[48] 6:14

[49] e.g. Baud.P.S. 3:11

[50] Bṛ.Up. 6:15

funeral rites for the householder include a ceremony by which the deceased enters the world of the Ancestors (sapiṇḍīkaraṇam) and feeding rites (śrāddhas) which are his sole means of sustenance during his sojourn in the world of the Ancestors. In the Gayā śrāddha, final release, originally achieved only by ascetics, becomes part of the domestic ritual, a state which can be achieved by any householder for whom the Gayā pilgrimage is performed; the processing of the dead householder which originally ended with the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam now ideally ends with the Gayā śrāddha after which the deceased no longer requires sustenance in the form of śrāddhas, since, like the ascetic, he is no longer a menber of a class of being within the cycle of death and rebirth. In the Garuḍa Purāṇic scheme, the dead person therefore goes through two rites of transition, the first to transfer him to the status of Ancestor and the second to transfer him to the state of liberation. In Sār. this second rite of transfer is integrated into the funeral ceremony and comes at the end of the sixteen offerings made in the natural time-scale, just as the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam ends the sixteen monthly offerings in the compressed time-scale.

Section 7. Untimely Death.

7a. Child Death.

No disposal rites are to be performed in the event of a miscarriage or a stillbirth[1], and according to Abegg's translation of Sār. 10:94 milk is distributed[2]. According to both texts infants should be buried[3] and milk distributed among the children of the neighbourhood in order to please them[4]. Older children are cremated[5], gifts of water pots and milk puddings are made[6], and according to Utt.K. infants and older children of the neighbourhood should be fed and clothed[7]. The transition from infancy and burial to childhood and cremation is variously said

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[1] Utt.K. 24:37; Sār. 10:94

[2] It is not entirely clear, however, whether śiśu refers to a stillbirth or to an infant dying after birth. According to Utt.K. 25:9-10 a child is an infant from the time of conception until sixteen months old and Wood and Subrahmanyam's translation of the same Sār. passage takes śiśu to refer to a child dying after birth, which agrees with the Utt.K. account of 24:37-8, where the gift of milk is associated with the death of a child after birth but before the tonsure ceremony.

[3] Utt.K. 24:37; 25:7; Sār. 10:92

[4] Utt.K. 24:38; 25:4

[5] Utt.K. 24:38; 25:7; Sār. 10:93

[6] Utt.K. 24:40; 25:4; Sār. 10:98

[7] 25:6

to be after tonsure[8], after the second year[9] and after twenty-seven months[10].

According to Utt.K, whenever a child dies before the fifth year the articles of diet and the daily necessities to which it was accustomed can be made over as gifts[11] and uncooked food should be given to brahmins[12]. According to Sār., however, brahmins are only fed in the case of the death of a brahmacārin (one who has undergone the saṃskāra of becoming a student of the Vedas) under the age of five[13].

In both texts it is stated that few rites are required for children because their corpses are small; they have not been through many ceremonies; they have had little contact with worldly objects and have little karma[14]. According to Utt.K., if a child dies he is sure to be born again and the gifts accompanying a child's funeral are necessary in order to prevent rebirth into a poor household[15].

Utt.K. states that pollution is observed after miscarriage

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[8] Utt.K. 24:37

[9] Utt.K. 25:7

[10] Sār. 10:93

[11] 25:13

[12] 25:18

[13] 10:96

[14] Utt.K. 25:12; Sār. 10:100

[15] Utt.K. 24:41-3

or stillbirth for as many days as the months of conception[16]. According to Sār., purification is immediate in the case of the death of an infant which has not cut its teeth; pollution is observed for one day if a child dies before tonsure; and for three days if a child dies before investiture with the sacred thread[17]. The texts do not mention any annual commemorative rites for dead children.

The textual material presents a slightly more complicated picture of child death than appears in the ethnography (Eth.7a) in that there is an intermediate stage in which children who have passed beyond infancy are cremated like adults but have post-funerary rites like those of infants.

The explanation for the lack of rites at child funerals corresponds with that given in the ethnography. It is interesting that Utt.K. explains the gift of food etc. at child funerals as a measure to prevent a bad rebirth. The idea that children achieve a quick rebirth is also to be seen in the ethnography (Eth.7a). Whereas at an adult's death the relatives have to process the ghost which results from the deceased's lifetime of accumulated karma before he can achieve rebirth, when a child dies there is no karma and therefore no ghost so rebirth is achieved more quickly. The fact that the gifts of food and clothing are made to children of approximately the same age as the deceased suggests

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[16] 24:36

[17] 13:13

that the dead child is being fed through the medium of other children. It is not clear how these food gifts ward off rebirth into a poor family and Utt.K. offers no explanation. It is possible that by feeding and clothing the child after death through the medium of other children the relatives ensure that it will have enough food and clothing in its next life, and the food gifts could also be seen as alms which generate good karma for the dead child.

7b. Death Of A Young Unmarried Man Or Woman.

According to Utt.K. a young person after the age of five is established as such and able to know the various sense organs and differentiate colours[18]. At the death of a person over five years old ten piṇḍas are offered along with milk puddings and lumps of sugar[19], whether he is a brahmacārin or not[20], and brahmins are also fed[21]. According to Sār., these ceremonies should be performed on the eleventh or twelfth days after death[22], and both texts contain the statement that these ceremonies for a young person (pauganḍa) are performed without the adult rites of releasing the bull and the great gift (gift of the bed and associated items)[23]. Both texts also contain the statement that

[18] Utt.K. 25:2

[19] Utt.K. 25:11; Sār. 10:96

[20] Sār. 10:96

[21] Utt.K. 25:21

[22] 10:97

[23] Utt.K. 25:5; Sār. 10:97

the gift of the bed and the release of the bull etc. should be performed for youths (kiśora) and young people (taruṇa), though according to Utt.K.[24] the rite of sapiṇḍīkaraṇam is not necessary.

Initially the texts would appear to be inconsistent in the matter of the gift of the cot and the bull release. The word used by Sār., however, in its statement about the omission of these rites is pauganda, which according to Utt.K.[25] refers to a child of five to nine years old, while one of the words it uses in the statement about the performance of the rites is kiśora, which, according to Utt.K.[26] refers to a child between the ages of nine to sixteen (the age of maturity). It would thus appear that the texts contain rituals of ascending complexity in the case of child deaths. Infants (śiśu) receive only milk through the medium of other children (G.P.7a), while young children (bāla) receive milk, food and clothing, also through the medium of gifts to other children (G.P.7a). Older children (pauganda) receive food through the medium of gifts to other children, also receive food through the medium of brahmins and are given piṇḍas; youths (kiśora) receive in addition to these gifts the gifts of the bed, cow, land etc. and have the bull release performed for them. The texts give no indication of the theory behind the more complex

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[24] 25:19

[25] 25:9-10

[26] 25:9-10

rites associated with the deaths of the older children. The rites become increasingly like the ghost processing ceremonies of an adult as the child gets older, and it is possible that the more complex rites reflect the idea that older children have rudimentary ghosts, which are not as dangerous as those of adults and require less processing. It is interesting that although the death of an unmarried youth is untimely, the texts give no indication that his spirit is feared, unlike in the ethnography (Eth.7b), where the relatives perform a ceremonial marriage for the corpse at the funeral to try and satisfy the dangerous ghost's unfulfilled wishes. It would appear that the powerful idea of the perpetual ghosthood of the person who dies with unfulfilled wishes, which also appears to have influenced the way in which a woman dying in childbirth is treated (Eth.7c), has affected the way in which an unmarried person is treated, causing brahmins as well as the lower castes and tribes to seek to fulfill the wish of marriage through a marriage ceremony at the funeral. But for this rite G.P. provides no textual evidence.

7c. Death Without A Son.

According to both texts the man who dies sonless suffers the same fate as the sinful and cannot hope to gain salvation[27]. According to the story of King Babhruvāhana, which appears in both texts, the man who dies without progeny, relatives or friends to perform his funeral rites for him is doomed to perpetual ghosthood. Perpetual ghosts subject their families to

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[27] Utt.K. 13:18; 29:4; Sār. 7:6

all kinds of torments, causing disease, barrenness, financial misfortune and family quarrels[28]. Utt.K. states, however, that this fate can be avoided if the person who has no one to perform funeral ceremonies for him carries out his own obsequial rites whilst still alive[29]. This ceremony is known as the jīvat-śrāddha (śrāddha for the living). In it the performer invites, feeds and gives cows to three brahmins representing Vasus, Rudras and Sūryas[30]. He then burns an image of a brahmin made of fifty pieces of kuśa grass and performs the rites which are normally carried out at the cremation ground[31]. Instead of the cremation of the kuśa grass figure he may alternatively simply propitiate the Earth, Yama and Rudra by making offerings to them at appropriate places[32]. He makes a series of libations and offers ten rice balls along with arghya, incense, a lamp etc. with the words,"O you of N.N. gotra (his own name), this water with sesame seeds is for you". These rites are spread over a month, after which the performer holds his own sapiṇḍīkaraṇam[33].

Both texts contain a version of the story of King Babhruvāhana in which the monarch frees a ghost who has no son to perform his funeral ceremonies by the performance of the nārāyaṇa

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[28] Utt.K. 9:27f.; 20:21f.

[29] 8:10; 14:9

[30] 8:15-19

[31] 8:21-3

[32] 8:24

[33] 8:32-3

bali[34]. Utt.K. also contains another version of the King Babhruvāhana story in which the sonless ghost is freed by means of the bull release ceremony, which is also said to free the ghosts of the sinful[35].

According to Utt.K., although a śrāddha performed on a kṣaya day, at the time of amāvāsyā or in the pretapakṣa should normally be of the pārvaṇa type, in the case of those without sons and women it should be an ekoddiṣṭa rite[36]. Other than this reference, however, the texts give no information about memorial ceremonies for the sonless dead.

When the ghost relates the reason for his plight in the story of King Babhruvāhana, he states that his perpetual ghosthood is due to the lack of a son, friends or relatives to perform his funeral ceremonies. According to this statement it would appear that a sonless person only becomes a ghost if he has no friends or relatives who can perform his funeral ceremonies properly. Elsewhere, however, the texts view the lack of a son as evidence of former misdeeds and thus, in common with the other types of unnatural adult death, which are also thought to be the result of sinful lives, the sonless man can only be rescued from ghosthood by the performance of the nārāyaṇa bali and the bull release. Similarly in the ethnography (Eth.7c) the spirits of the

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[34] Utt.K. 27:29f.; Sār. 7:28f.

[35] 9:1f.

[36] 45:7

sonless dead, despite the fact that their funeral rites are usually correctly performed by friends or relatives, are nevertheless thought to torment their relatives unless special measures are taken.

The jīvat-śrāddha, whereby a man performs his own funeral ceremony by burning a kuśa grass representation of himself, is not found in the ethnography. Utt.K. makes no mention of the form which the funeral for one who has performed the jīvat-śrāddha should take and thus its relation with the nārāyaṇa bali and the bull release is not made explicit. It is not clear whether the person who has performed the jivāt-śrāddha requires no further rites and, like the ascetic, who also performs his own cremation whilst still alive, is buried without further ceremonies, or whether a nārāyaṇa bali and bull release are still thought to be necessary in order to prevent the deceased from becoming a perpetual ghost.

The reference to the sonless dead meriting only an ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha on the kṣaya day, at amāvāsyā or pretapakṣa, when pārvaṇa śrāddha is normally performed, suggests that the sonless cannot have the pārvaṇa śrāddha, the ideal memorial rite (G.P.6c), performed for them. While ekoddiṣṭa rites can be performed for individuals by other relatives, it would appear that only a son can perform the pārvaṇa śrāddha for his father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

In G.P. the perpetual ghosthood of the sonless is seen purely in terms of past misdeeds, which are dealt with by means

of the nārāyana bali, whereas in the ethnography those who die sonless are also thought to become perpetual ghosts because of their powerful unfulfilled desires (Eth.7c). While the participants may deal with an individual's bad karma by means of the nārāyana bali, the unfulfilled desire for a son is less easy to deal with, so that many communities appear to feel that there can be no final propitiation of the sonless dead (Eth.7c).

7d. Woman Dying In Childbirth Or Pregnancy.

According to Utt.K., a woman dying during menstruation or immediately after childbirth should be bathed with water purified by reciting punyāha mantras and cooled by one hundred winnowing fans[37]. She is also bathed with pañcagavya and her clothes are changed with fresh ones before she is cremated as prescribed[38]. According to Sār., a woman dying at the end of her term of pregnancy should have her womb cut open. The child should then be taken out and placed on the ground and the woman alone should be cremated[39]. The texts make no reference to any further rites to be performed for women who die during menstruation, pregnancy or childbirth.

The purification of the corpse of a woman dying during menstruation or after childbirth corresponds closely with that performed by brahminical communities in the ethnography, as does

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[37] 4:173

[38] 4:175

[39] 10:91

the practice of removing the foetus from the womb before cremation.

It is interesting that those who die during menstruation or childbirth are not included in the lists of unnatural deaths for which the nārāyaṇa bali is said to be required[40]. Utt.K. states that for those who have died such unnatural deaths there can be no cremation[41]. Instead the nārāyaṇa bali includes among its ceremonies the construction and cremation of a substitute corpse[42]. The fact that special regulations for women dying during menstruation or during childbirth concern purification of the corpse for cremation suggests that as far as Utt.K. is concerned the nārāyaṇa bali is not performed after such deaths. The lists of unnatural deaths requiring nārāyaṇa bali are not exhaustive, however, and it is difficult to see why death in childbirth or during menstruation should not necessitate the performance of the nārāyaṇa bali; furthermore, the King Babhruvāhana story appears to contain a version of the nārāyaṇa bali which does not include the cremation of a substitute corpse (G.P.7e). This is supported by the account of the Sholāpur brahmins (Eth.7d), who appear to perform a nārāyaṇa bali when a woman dies in childbirth (Eth.7d), using the type of rite described in the King Babhruvāhana story (G.P.7e).

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[40] Utt.K. 4:104-9; 40:4-12; 44:1-3

[41] 40:12; 44:4

[42] 4:154; 40:64

In the ethnography the ghost of a woman dying in childbirth is particularly feared (Eth 7d.) and the funeral rites of all groups contain features to stop the ghost troubling the community, features absent from the texts. It would appear, particularly among the caste Hindus and tribes, that ideas about the perpetual ghosthood of those dying with unfulfilled wishes have led to the inclusion of various exorcistic procedures which are in the texts. As in the case of the sonless dead (Eth.7c, G.P.7c), while the nārāyaṇa bali can deal with the bad karma which caused the death, it cannot assuage the unfulfilled desires of the deceased, so that they can be controlled and confined but never fully processed.

7e. Death From Leprosy, Cholera Or Smallpox.

Those who die from cholera, germs or great ailments are included in Utt.K.'s lists of unnatural deaths[43]. Those who meet with such deaths are said to go to hell[44] and to become ghosts who roam over the earth[45]. For such people there is no rite of cremation, no water libation, no śrāddhas and no observance of impurity[46]. The only way that such people can be purified and rescued from perpetual ghosthood is by the performance of the nārāyaṇa bali[47]. For a brahmin the nārāyaṇa bali should be

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[43] 4:104-9; 22:8-13; 40:4-12

[44] Utt.K. 40:4-12

[45] Utt.K. 22:13

[46] Utt.K. 40:12

[47] Utt.K. 4:115-6; 40:12

performed within six months of death, for a ksatriya within three months of death, for a vaiśya within a month and a half of death and for a śūdra immediately[48].

The nārāyana bali should be performed at a holy place, preferably in a temple of Krsna[49]. It commences with a series of libations and the offering of various articles of worship to Visnu, accompanied by the recitation of mantras from the Vedas and Purānas[50]. According to Utt.K., the performer should face south and recite the mantra, "May the lord Pundarīkāksa who has no beginning, no end, who bears on his person a conch, a discus and a mace, confer salvation to the dead[51]." After this an ekoddista is performed in which eleven pindas are offered[52]. According to one of the Utt.K. versions a śrāddha for the eleven deities should be offered on the day after the ekoddista[53]. After the ekoddista śrāddha the performer should offer the eight padas, food, clothes and possessions to brahmins[54]. A śrāddha is performed for Visnu, Brahmā, Yama and the deceased[55], represented

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[48] Utt.K. 40:13

[49] Utt.K. 4:116; 40:14-15

[50] Utt.K. 40:115-9; 40:16-17

[51] Utt.K. 40:17-18

[52] 4:120,124; 40:21,27-30

[53] 40:30

[54] Utt.K. 4:122-3; 40:22-3,25,39-41

[55] Utt.K. 4:126-132; 40:31-8

by images made of gold, copper, silver and iron respectively[56]. The performer then constructs an effigy of the deceased out of grass, leaves and various other substances[57]. The performer worships the sacrificial fire using the appropriate sacrificial vessels if the deceased was an <u>āhitāgni</u>[58]. Gifts of sesame seeds, iron, gold, cotton, salt and a cow are given[59], and according to one of the Utt.K. versions the Vaitaraṇī cow should also be given at this point[60]. The effigy is then burnt whilst the performer meditates on Viṣṇu[61], after which impurity lasts for ten days, with a <u>piṇḍa</u> each day, or alternatively it lasts for three days[62]. All other rites are performed for a year, after which the dead person attains salvation[63].

The King Babhruvāhana stories in Utt.K. and Sār. contain another version of the <u>nārāyaṇa bali</u>, in which the performer sets up an image of Viṣṇu which he makes out of two gold pieces. He decorates it with ornaments, dresses it in a pair of yellow garments and bathes it with holy waters[64]. He then worships

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[56] 40:32

[57] Utt.K. 4:135-148; 40:44-58

[58] Utt.K. 4:149; 40:58

[59] Utt.K. 4:151-2; 40:60-1

[60] 40:62

[61] Utt.K. 4:154; 40:64

[62] Utt.K. 40:65

[63] <u>ibid.</u>

[64] Utt.K. 27:42; Sār. 7:49-50

Śrīdhara (a form of Viṣṇu) to the east of it, Madhusūdana (Viṣṇu as slayer of the demon Madhu) to the south, Vāmadeva (Viṣṇu as the divine dwarf) in the west and Gadādhara (Viṣṇu the club bearer) in the north[65]. He worships Brahmā and Śiva[66] or two forms of Śiva[67] in the centre. He makes offerings of curd, milk etc. into the fire to these deities[68]. He then performs the aurdhvadehika (funeral) rites with all the śrāddhas including the release of the bull[69]. The rite is concluded by gifts to thirteen brahmins (which in the Sār. version include the gift of a bed) and the offering of the pretaghaṭa (ghost vessel)[70]. The pretaghaṭa is a pot of refined gold consecrated to Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu and the guardians of the quarters, which is said to destroy all evil and remove even major sins[71].

Utt.K. also mentions the performance of a memorial rite after a year for those who have died abnormal deaths. The performer worships Viṣṇu and Yama on the eleventh day of the bright half of the month with incense, flowers, piṇḍas etc., after which he throws the articles of worship into the water, muttering all the while the personal name and the gotra of the

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65 Utt.K. 27:46-7; Sār. 7:51

66 Utt.K. 27:46-7

67 Sār. 7:51

68 Utt.K. 27:48; Sār. 7:53

69 Utt.K. 27:49-50; Sār. 7:49-50

70 Utt.K. 27:51,56; Sār. 7:56

71 Utt.K. 27:56-60; Sār. 7:58-63

dead person[72]. He then worships Yama and Viṣṇu a second time[73]. On the second day of the ceremony he worships Yama and Viṣṇu again, makes piṇḍa offerings to his other Ancestors, and then offers a series of five piṇḍas to Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva and his attendants and the deceased. While offering the five piṇḍas he utters the name of the dead person and that of Viṣṇu[74]. He should then offer gifts to brahmins, uttering the name and surname of the dead person with the formula, "May Viṣṇu be pleased"[75]. As the brahmins leave he offers a libation naming the dead person and saying, "May the departed soul be pleased". He then eats in silence with his family and friends (having fasted during the first day of the ceremony[76]), the whole procedure being repeated every year on the anniversary of the death[77].

In the ethnography, while communities offer karmic explanations for death by smallpox and cholera, they also say that smallpox is caused by the goddess Śītalā and cholera by Kālī (Eth.7e). In G.P. contagious diseases are included in the lists of bad deaths which are associated with sinners and no reference is made to their being caused by the goddesses Śītalā and Kālī.

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[72] 44:6-8

[73] 44:10

[74] 44:12-17

[75] 44:18-20

[76] 44:11

[77] 44:20-1

The nārāyaṇa bali as described in the ritual section of Utt.K. contains all the major features of a normal funeral ceremony: the gift of padas, a set of ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas and an elaborate śrāddha for the five deities resembling the eleventh day ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha of Sār[78].(G.P.4e). In addition, the nārāyaṇa bali includes a ceremony of worship and meditation on Viṣṇu, which is not to be seen in a normal funeral ceremony. Thus, instead of a series of rituals spread over a number of days, the obsequial rites up to the end of pollution are compressed into one ceremony based on the cremation of an effigy of the deceased.

In the Vedic material the cremation of an effigy is associated with the funeral for a death abroad, where the relations do not have the corpse of the deceased, but in G.P the cremation of an effigy is not only used on the occasion of a death abroad[79] but is also associated with those types of abnormal death in which the relatives do have the corpse of the deceased. Although the Garuḍa Purāṇic texts give no explanation as to why an effigy should then be substituted for the corpse, one may deduce that such a corpse is considered unfit for cremation. The tension between the auspicious and the inauspicious, the pure and the impure, which surrounds the corpse after a normal death is not present after an unnatural death; then the body is wholly impure and inauspicious and so cannot be

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[78] 12:6

[79] Utt.K. 4:168

offered as a pure sacrifice into the fire. Instead an effigy is cremated with the full rites, and pollution is observed with respect to this image and not to the body, which is discarded and ignored for the purposes of the funeral rites. The funeral of an effigy of the deceased is recorded among the Audhiyas (tribal) in the ethnography (Eth.7e).

Although Vedic ritual includes a ceremony whereby a substitute body is cremated when the relatives do not have the body, it contains no equivalent of the full nārāyaṇa bali as it appears in Utt.K.'s ritual section. While the G.P. ceremonies for normal funerals have much in common with Vedic ritual,those for an abnormal death are largely non-Vedic and aim to prevent the deceased becoming a dangerous ghost[80]. This pattern is repeated in ethnography: brahmins and caste Hindus tend to follow Garuḍa Purāṇic ritual in the case of normal funerals, but include ceremonies not found in the G.P. accounts, such as measures to control the ghost of a woman dying in childbirth (Eth.7d) and marriage for the corpse of an unmarried youth (Eth.7b), in the case of abnormal deaths. It would appear that belief in and fear of dangerous ghosts has increasingly influenced orthodox ritual, which in its early Vedic form was simply concerned with offering the pure sacrifice of the corpse and processing the impure spirit so that it became an Ancestor.

The version of the nārāyaṇa bali seen in the King Babhruvāhana story makes no reference to the cremation of an

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[80] Utt.K. 9:57-62; 20:21-46; 21:5-10

effigy; instead, it appears to consist of a compression of the śrāddha rites preceded by worship of and meditation on Viṣṇu in his various forms. In the King Babhruvāhana story, however, the nārāyaṇa bali is not part of a funeral rite to prevent someone who has died an untimely death from becoming a ghost, but a rite to transfer someone who has already become a permanent ghost to the status of Ancestor. It is possible that the two different versions of the nārāyaṇa bali, therefore, perform slightly different functions, the version in Utt.K.'s ritual section acting as a funeral to process those in danger of becoming ghosts while the King Babhruvāhana version acts as a more exorcistic rite dealing with those who have already become permanent ghosts. The nārāyaṇa bali certainly appears to perform a dual function in the ethnography, being used both in the funeral ceremonies of those who have died unnatural deaths (Eth.7d,e,f) and as an exorcistic rite to rid families of the misfortune caused by the malign influence of a ghost (Eth.7h). It is interseting that the pretaghaṭa which is associated with this form of nārāyaṇa bali appears in the normal funeral ceremonies of the Chetris (caste Hindus) of Nepal[81], where it is offered on the thirteenth day,"in case anything has been forgotten", and is intended to release the deceased from ghost form. Possibly in this case a powerful rite from the funeral for an abnormal death has been adopted to act as a fail-safe device in case some mistake, which would condemn the

[81] Bennett p.107

deceased to perpetual ghosthood, has unwittingly been made in the funeral rites by the relatives.

Viṣṇu is particularly associated with funeral ritual: it is on Visnu's ten avatāras that a dying man is supposed to meditate (G.P.1c) and it is Viṣṇu that the performer must worship if he wishes to release the person who died an abnormal death from perpetual ghosthood. The strong association between Viṣṇu and funeral ritual seems to have arisen from his connection with sacrifice and his association with redeemer myths. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa Nārāyaṇa is identified with Puruṣa, from whose self-sacrifice the world came into being[82], while in the Bhagavadgītā Kṛṣṇa (one of the avatāras) identifies himself with the principle of sacrifice, adhiyajña[83]. Coupled with this strong association with sacrifice is Viṣṇu's role in the avatāra myths as the saviour of mankind and destroyer of evil. Thus, at the nārāyaṇa bali the performer worships Viṣṇu, the destroyer of evil, in a rite designed to remove the evil karma which occasioned the abnormal death, as he also worships Viṣṇu, the primal being whose sacrifice created the world, in order that the cycle of sacrifice and regeneration may not be broken by the abnormal death.

It is not clear from Utt.K. whether the yearly rite is a substitute for the nārāyaṇa bali or whether it represents the

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[82] Śat.Br. 12:3:4

[83] 8:4

form of memorial rite which should be used in the case of someone for whom the nārāyaṇa bali has been performed.

7f. Violent Death And Suicide.

Those who commit suicide or die violently are included in Utt.K.'s lists of abnormal deaths requiring the performance of the nārāyaṇa bali[84]. Both texts mention that for those dying through snake-bite further rites have to be performed in order to remove sarpa doṣa (the evil of snakes)[85]: a snake made of gold and a cow should be given to a brahmin[86] with the words,"May the King of Serpents be pleased"[87]. According to Sār. the performer should also worship a serpent on the fifth day of each fortnight by drawing a serpent on the ground with rice powder and offering it flowers, sesame seed, food, milk etc.[88]. According to Utt.K. if a person dies of snake-bite, drowning, by weapons, by being gored or some other accident, the relatives of a brahmin remain impure for six months, those of a kṣatriya for two and a half months, those of a vaiśya for a month and a half and those of a śūdra for a month[89].

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[84] 4:104-9; 22:8-13; 40:4-12

[85] Utt.K. 4:134

[86] Utt.K. 4:133; Sār. 12:77

[87] Sār. 12:77

[88] 12:74-6

[89] Utt.K. 13:9-11

It is interesting that the length of impurity observed by the varṇas in the case of death by smallpox, leprosy (G.P.7e) and through violence represents an inversion of the traditional order, in which brahmins observe the shortest period of primary pollution and śūdras the longest (G.P.4h). This inversion of normal order emphasises the abnormal nature of such deaths.

Utt.K. states that by giving the snake-oblation the person who has died from snake-bite becomes free of sarpa doṣa. Whereas in the ethnography the communities offer several explanations for the necessity of snake propitiations (Eth.7f), neither of the texts explains the exact nature of sarpa doṣa or why the nārāyaṇa bali, which is sufficient to deal with the evils of other types of abnormal death, must be supplemented by the snake oblation in the case of death from snake-bite.

It is interesting that ethnographic accounts of brahminical communities include no reference to propitiatory rites for snakes although such rites do appear in the descriptions of out-caste and tribal communities.

7g. Death Under The Wrong Asterism.

Both texts state that the five constellations from Dhaniṣṭāḥ to Revatī (the pañcaka) are unsuitable for cremations so that after a death on one of these days disposal of the corpse should be delayed, if possible, until after the pañcaka[90]. If cremation is performed on these days it brings great evil to the deceased's

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[90] Utt.K. 4:176; Sār. 10:26

family and causes another death[91]. The evil of a death and cremation during the pañcaka can be averted if the chief mourner prepares four images of darbha grass consecrated with the four ṛkṣa mantras (mantras of the constellations) and places them near the corpse. A sacrifice is then performed and the corpse is burnt along with the effigies[92]. According to Sār., on the day of offering the piṇḍas the chief mourner should perform pacificatory rites (śāntividhi) to ward off evil, by giving a vessel full of sesame, gold, silver and diamonds and a vessel filled with clarified butter[93]. Utt.K. states that the sons of the deceased should perform a pacificatory ceremony (śāntipauṣṭika) at the end of primary pollution, giving a cow, gold, sesame, food, umbrella etc. to a brahmin[94].

The textual material corresponds closely with the rites described in the ethnography of those who have died during the pañcaka (Eth.7g). Although the texts give no explanation for these rites, the consecration of each grass figure with a ṛkṣa mantra suggests that substitute corpses are being dedicated to the asterisms. Four figures plus the corpse itself thus constitute five bodies for the five asterisms and prevent death from claiming one or more of the deceased's relatives.

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[91] Utt.K. 4:178-9; Sār. 10:25-6

[92] Utt.K. 4:180-181; Sār. 10:29-31

[93] 10:32

[94] 4:182

Those who have died under the wrong asterism do not appear in Utt.K.'s lists of types of abnormal death requiring the nārāyaṇa bali and it is not clear whether the special rites at cremation are followed by normal śrāddha rites or whether the nārāyaṇa bali is also considered to be necessary, as it is with the snake-oblation (G.P.7f).

7h. The Gayā Śrāddha.

In its section concerning the Gayā śrāddha, the Pūrvakhaṇḍa describes an offering of piṇḍas to be made by the pilgrim at Pretaśilā[95]. The performer accompanies the offering with a recitation of the Piṇḍa Kharaṣi (the mantras prescribed for the occasion in the Gayā Māhātmya) dedicating the piṇḍas to those who have died in infancy, committed suicide, died violently, been consigned to the hells or achieved low rebirths[96]. According to Pūrv.K. Pretaśilā (ghost hill) is so called because it ensures the prosperity and uplift of those men who have become ghosts[97]. Thus through the Gayā śrāddha the performer enables those relatives who are in hell to go to heaven[98].

The description of the Gayā śrāddha in Pūrv.K. corresponds closely with that in ethnography, enabling the transfer of ghosts to the status of Ancestor as well as achieving the release of

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[95] Pūrv.K. 85:1

[96] Pūrv.K 85:2-20

[97] Pūrv.K. 86:1-2

[98] Pūrv.K. 84:30

those who are already Ancestors (Eth.6f,7h,G.P.6f). Since the description of the Gayā śrāddha appears in Pūrv.K. it is not clear how it relates to the rituals for abnormal death, such as nārāyaṇa bali, in Utt.K., for they too are said to achieve salvation for those who have died untimely deaths (G.P.7e). In the ethnography the Gayā śrāddha at Pretaśilā is a popular exorcistic ritual for those families who believe that their misfortunes are due to ghosts (Eth.7d). The line between funeral rites designed to process those in danger of becoming ghosts and exorcistic rites intended to deal with those who have already become permanent ghosts, however, is blurred, as can be seen in the ethnography where the nārāyaṇa bali is used both as a funeral rite after abnormal deaths and as an exorcistic rite for childless couples and families suffering from misfortune (Eth.7d,e,f). It seems likely, therefore, that the Gayā śrāddha at Pretaśilā can be seen both as a funeral ritual which can be performed to reinforce the effect of the nārāyaṇa bali and as an exorcistic rite which can rid families of the malign influence of a ghost by transferring it to the status of Ancestor.

Section 8. Rites Concerning Widows.

G.P. assumes that all widows become satīs and makes no reference to ceremonies for the widow who does not immolate herself on her husband's funeral pyre.

Vedic Sūtras.

The earliest systematic accounts of funeral rites are to be found in the sūtras, literature written by and for brahmins. According to Gonda[1] the term sūtra, often translated as aphorism for want of a better term denotes a large and varied number of 'manuals of instruction' and 'systematic surveys or resumés'. The rise of this type of literature was largely caused by the need to codify the growing mass of details preserved in circles of specialists in some branch of traditional knowledge[2]. The sūtra literature can be placed in the general period from the sixth or seventh century B.C. to about the second century A.D. but more precise dating than this is virtually impossible to establish[3]. What can be said with certainty, however, is that the sūtras were composed over a fairly long period of time corresponding to the interval between older Vedic and the Epic literatures[4].

Sūtra literature can be divided into two main categories; manuals dealing with major (śrauta) ceremonies and those manuals dealing with domestic (gṛhya) ritual. The term śrauta is derived from śruti, the eternal and infallible truth 'heard' by the divine sages (ṛṣi), and śrauta ritual consists of ceremonies which are to be performed by the āhitāgni, the man who kindles and maintains the three sacred Vedic fires. Gṛhya ritual, on the

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[1] R.S. p.465

[2] ibid.

[3] Gonda R.S. p.476

[4] Gonda R.S. p.478

other hand, can be performed by the anāhitāgni, the man who kindles and maintains the domestic fire. The funeral ceremonies, known as the pitṛmedha (sacrifice to the Ancestors) rites, are included in the śrauta manuals of the Kātyāyana, Śāṅkhāyana and Mānava schools; they form part of the gṛhya-sūtras for the Āśvalāyana, Āgniveśya, Kauśika and Vaikhānasa schools; while in the Baudhāyana, Bhāradvāja and Gautama schools they form independent manuals known as pitṛmedha-sūtras. Gonda suggests that the reason for the discrepancy by which the pitṛmedha appears as both a śrauta and a gṛhya ritual may be that for some schools it was assumed that only an āhitāgni qualified for the rites of pitṛmedha, in which case it was included among the śrauta rites, while in other schools the pitṛmedha was open to an anāhitāgni and thus was included among the gṛhya rituals[5].

As Gonda points out[6], a complete understanding of a Vedic ritual and a thorough insight into the significance of all its details can in most cases only be reached if all the relevant sūtra literature texts are studied at the same time and as a coherent whole and for this reason my study of the Vedic funeral rites will be based on Caland's Die Altindischen Todten und Bestattungsgebräuche, a description of funeral rites using the thirteen available texts of the Vedic schools and associated secondary material, plus his Über Totenverehrung bei einigen der Indogermanischen Völker and his Altindischer Ahnencult, which

[5] R.S. p.616-17

[6] R.S. p.471

provide similar surveys of Vedic post-funerary śrāddha ritual. These will be supplemented with material from summaries of Vedic ritual found in Kane's History Of Dharmaśāstra, Gonda's Vedic Ritual, and Śrautakośa, where necessary. Since my aim is not to compare the various Vedic schools with each other but to produce a summary of the main features of Vedic funeral ritual for the purposes of comparison with the ethnographic and Garuḍa Purāṇic accounts, I shall not provide extensive references for the material presented, only naming individual Vedic sources where necessary and differentiating primary from secondary material. More detailed references and comparisons of the funeral rites of the various Vedic schools are to be found in the above mentioned works by Caland. At the end of each section I give references to Caland's fuller expositions of these rituals. I will be following Caland in referring to the second praśna of Baudhāyana's Pitṛmedha-sūtras as Secondary Baudhāyana and in referring to Bhāradvāja, Āpastamba and Hiraṇyakeśin as the later Taittirīya school texts, to differentiate them from Baudhāyana. I include a list of the Vedic sources used by Caland in the appendix.

Stage 1.Rites For The Dying Person, Preparation Of The Corpse And The Funeral Procession.

1a. Removal Of The Dying Person From The Bed.

The dying person is removed from his bed and laid with his head turned towards the south (i.e. with his head to the north and feet to the south) on an area which has been smeared with cow dung. Grass with its tips pointing south is laid on the area and

sesame seeds and gravel are also strewn on the spot. This area is prepared either in the room where the three sacred fires are maintained or, if the dying person is anāhitāgni, in the room where the domestic fire is kept. According to the three adherents of the later Taittirīya school (Bhāradvāja, Āpastamba and Hiraṇyakeśin), after the dying person has been laid down the verse "Earth, covering all, hath placed thee in her lap; be gentle and rest kindly on him; grant him protection, extending wide[7]", is repeated again and again. The second half of this verse with minor variations is also used by the Śaunakins[8]. (Caland A.T.B. p.8)

The removal of the dying person from the bed onto an area smeared with cow dung and strewn with sesame seed is a Vedic custom that is also found in G.P. (G.P.1a) and the ethnography (Eth.1a). The Vedic material does not state that a person is removed to the ground to protect him from demons, the explanation offered both in G.P. and in the ethnography. The recitation of T.S.1:4:40, however, suggests that this practice is also a protective measure in the Vedic material.

In the Vedic accounts the dying person lies with his head to the north as in the G.P. (G.P.1a) and the ethnography (Eth.1a). In Vedic ritual east is the direction of the gods[9], north the

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[7] T.S.1:4:40

[8] A.S.18,2,19

[9] Śat.Br.3:1:1:2

direction of men[10], west is the direction of hope or expectation[11] and south the direction of the dead and the Ancestors[12]. The orientation of the dying person reflects his ambiguous ritual status: his head is placed to the north, the auspicious direction of men, but he looks towards the south, the inauspicious direction of death and the Ancestors. When the dying man is placed with his head to the north and his face turned to the south, he is being started on his journey from being a man through death to the status of Ancestor by being pointed towards the region occupied by the Ancestors in the ritual cult.

1b. Putting Substances Into The Mouth Of The Dying Man Or Corpse.

Later authorities state that the head of the dying person is to be laid in the son's lap. Two lines of ash should be drawn on the dying man's forehead and he should be given Ganges water to drink[13]. In Secondary Baudhāyana a piece of gold is laid on the mouth of the corpse at death, and in some sources pieces of gold are laid on all the facial orifices.
(Caland A.T.B. p.8,11,20)

The placing of a piece of gold in the mouth of the dying man or the newly dead corpse, a rite found in G.P. and the

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[10] Śat.Br.3:1:1:7

[11] Śat.Br.11:1:6:23

[12] Śat.Br.3:6:4:12

[13] Prayoga Tanjore and the Āśvalāyanīya school Antyeṣṭiprayoga

ethnography, is also a Vedic ritual. Although the Vedic accounts contain no explanation for it, all schools place pieces of gold on the facial orifices of the corpse immediately before burning (Ved.2c). This suggests that in the Vedic context it is a purificatory rite to make the body fit for sacrifice, which in some schools is anticipated at an earlier stage in the funeral ritual. The practice of putting Ganges water into the mouth of the dying man seems to have been a late Vedic development appearing only in the secondary material, while the practice of placing the five gems, pañcagavya or a tulasī leaf in the mouth of a dying person or newly dead corpse appears to be Purāṇic in origin.

1c. Last Gifts And Words.

At the final moments Vedic texts should be pronounced over the dying man. The texts prescribed differ according to the school and are to be whispered either in the right ear (Bhāradvāja, Hiraṇyakeśin) or in both ears (Baudhāyana, Āśvalāyana). According to Āśvalāyana, the Mādhyandinas and Bhāradvāja, relatives should recite the thousand names of Nārāyaṇa or the holy names of Śiva so that the dying man hears them.

The more recent sources[14] state that the ten last gifts of a cow, piece of land, sesame, gold, etc. should be given to a brahmin either by the dying man himself, if he is able, or by a

[14] Prayoga Tanjore, Āśvalāyana Antyeṣṭiprayoga, Keśavasvāmin, Harihara and Viśvanātha.

representative, usually his eldest son. The gift of a _śālagrāma_ stone and a milking cow is also recommended. This cow is either called the death cow (_utkrāntidhenu_), because it is offered when a person is close to death, or the Vaitaraṇī cow, because it tows the dead person across the river of hell. In Keśavasvāmin the following verse should be recited when the cow is given:"This terrible Vaitaraṇī, the river in the kingdom of Yama, I desire to ferry you across. I give the brahmin this cow". Keśavasvāmin also states that the cow should be black.
(Caland A.T.B p.7-11).

The practice of reciting divine names and holy texts to a dying man which is found both in the ethnography (Eth.1c) and G.P. (G.P.1c), appears to be Vedic in origin, but the ten last gifts and the gift of the Vaitaraṇī cow are found only in the secondary Vedic material and appear to represent a late development in Vedic ritual. The rise in importance of the Vaitaraṇī cow and the ten last gifts reflects the change from the early Vedic view of death, in which the deceased, offered as a sacrifice on the funeral pyre, follows the path established by Yama to a realm of immortal life and bliss, to the Purāṇic view, in which the deceased undertakes a journey through a mythological landscape of cities, hells and the terrible river Vaitaraṇī, all of which he must negotiate in order to reach the kingdom of the

terrible Yama, where he is judged according to his past deeds and sent to heaven or hell[15] (Ved.1d).

The inclusion of the gift of the <u>śālagrāma</u> stone in later Vedic texts reflects a rise in the prominence of Viṣṇu as the god of funeral ritual. By the time of G.P., Viṣṇu is not only worshipped in the form of a <u>śālagrāma</u> stone[16] and through the recitation of his holy names immediately before a normal death (G.P.1c), but as Nārāyaṇa is also appealed to in the case of abnormal deaths in a ceremony bearing his name (G.P.7e).

None of the Vedic sources include the option of the dying man becoming a deathbed ascetic (<u>ātura saṃnyāsī</u>), a rite which is mentioned in both the Garuḍa Purāṇic and the ethnographic accounts (G.P.1c,Eth.1c). Originally renunciation was in direct opposition to the life of the householder and sacrificial ritual. In the early Upaniṣadic period (c.700-c.400 B.C.), among the individuals of varied backgrounds who contributed to the philosophy of the <u>Upaniṣads</u> were some who renounced society for life in the forest. All these wanderers professed the religious life and adopted various speculative doctrines rejecting their ties with relatives and society at large to live a wandering existence. The ascetic was believed to acquire an insight into the nature of the cosmos and through this knowledge to reach a state of freedom transcending all mundane limitations[17].

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[15] Utt.K. 5:83f.; 16:10f.; 47:25-36; Sār.2; 8:70-86; 14:50f.

[16] Sār.8:5

[17] Brockington p.76

According to orthodox ideas, as presented in the Brāhmaṇas, the sacrificer who had led the correct ritual life was enabled to escape at death from the regime of successive rebirths and deaths which would otherwise be his fate[18] (Ved.1d). According to the Upaniṣads, however, the man who lives the life of a sacrificer does not escape rebirth but passes at death into the smoke of the cremation pyre, from there into the night and eventually into the lunar world of the Ancestors, whence he returns in the form of rain to be reborn on earth[19]. The man who practises a life of renunciation in the forest, however, unlike the sacrificer, goes through the flame of the pyre into the day and ultimately to the Brahma worlds from which there is no return, and it is this release from rebirth which is presented as the ideal to which all men should aspire[20]. Gradually, however, renunciation, which originally rejected the orthodox sacrificial cult as unable to achieve man's ultimate aim, came to be absorbed into the very cult which it sought to reject, and by the time of Manu (c.200 B.C.-c.100 A.D.), renunciation had become the last stage of orthodox ritual life and was prescribed for the elderly brahmin who has performed his duties as a householder and raised his sons to maturity[21]. It would seem from G.P. that it came to be possible to delay one's renunciation until the deathbed and still

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[18] Śat.Br.11:2:2:5; 13:5:1:2; Jai.Br.2:329-31

[19] Bṛ.Up. 6:2:16; Chān.Up. 5:10:3; Kauś.Up. 1:2; Praś.Up. 1:9

[20] Bṛ.Up. 6:2:15; Chān.Up. 5:10:1; Kauś.Up 1:2; Praś.Up.1:9

[21] Manu 6:2

receive its benefits (G.P.1c), and from the evidence of the ethnography it would appear that *śrāddha* rites are not performed in the case of the deathbed ascetic (Eth.1c). The development of the Gayā *śrāddha* (G.P.6f,Eth.6f) offers the further option of obtaining final release for every householder, so that, logically, taking *saṃnyāsa* becomes redundant.

1d.Preparation Of The Corpse.

In some sources the preparation of the corpse commences with a *homa*; in others this follows the dressing of the corpse. The son and relatives of the deceased change their sacred threads to the inauspicious direction (over the right shoulder and under the left armpit), loosen their hair and spread dust on it. The son performs the expiation ceremony (*prāyaścitta*) if the deceased has not already performed it before death, and declares the intention of the ritual (*saṃkalpa*):"Today on such and such a day I perform the sacrament of cremation on N.N.[22]". The corpse of the *āhitāgni* is carried between the altar (*vedi*) and the rubbish heap (*utkara*) and laid down to the west of the *gārhapatya* fire for, according to Baudhāyana,"At this spot the material for the oblation is (usually) poured out[23]". The corpse should then be placed within the altar with the head towards the east (Baudhāyana) or the south (the other Taittirīyas) because, according to

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[22] Gautama.1,2,7 places the *saṃkalpa* later, at the cremation itself.

[23] Baudh.P.S.1:1

Baudhāyana,"At this spot is the oblation placed[24]." If the deceased is an anāhitāgni the corpse is simply laid down to the west of the domestic (aupāsana) fire. The preparations for a normal homa offering take place: the sprinkling of the fires and the fire-place, the placing of the offering utensils on the grass, the preparation of the ghee, etc.. The performer pours an offering to Yama over the āhavanīya fire while he touches the right arm of the corpse, reciting the words,"The one who has passed along the great, steep straights, spying out the path for many, the son of Vivasvant, the collector of people, King Yama, be honoured now with the offering, svāhā[25]". He then makes an offering without words into the dakṣiṇāgni. If the deceased is an anahitagni only one offering is made into the aupāsana fire.

The body is then taken and laid on a spot to the south of the vihāra (the area where the three sacred fires are installed) if an āhitāgni and a spot to the south of the domestic fire if he was an anāhitāgni. It is washed by the relatives, starting at the feet and ending with the head. The beard and other hair is shaved and the nails are cut. It is anointed, garlanded with nalada (spikenard) and decorated according to family tradition. Some schools bind the thumbs with one or two white threads, a piece of yarn or a strong piece of grass. In several of the sources the big toes are bound as well, while in other sources the thumbs and left foot only are bound. The Vedic materials mention a rite in

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[24] Baud.P.S.1:1

[25] R.V.10:14:1

which the corpse is cut open and the entrails are taken out. The faeces are removed from the entrails, which are then washed, filled with ghee and replaced in the opening, which is then sewn up with darbha grass. They conclude with a statement forbidding this rite, however, claiming that its practice condemns the performer's offspring to hunger. The decorated corpse is then covered in a garment, brought between the altar and the rubbish heap and laid down with its head towards the south on a bier made of uḍumbara wood, over which a black antelope skin has previously been laid with its head towards the south and the hairy side underneath.

At this point the corpse is clothed for the last time. A new white cloth which has never been washed or cut is put on the corpse with the fringe at the feet. The followers of the Taittirīya school and the Śaunakins recite during this rite,"This be your first garment", to which the Śaunakins add,"The god Savitṛ gives this garment to bear you. Go to Yama's kingdom wearing this cloth". Among the Taittirīyas the used clothing is then taken away with the words,"Now I take this off which you have worn up until now. Enjoy the reward of this offering, the gift, which you also offer to distant relatives"; it should then be put on a son or other near relative of the dead person. This garment should be worn until it has become old or for the remaining part of the day (Baudhāyana). In some of the other schools it is stated that a quarter of the cloth covering the corpse should be removed from the end covering the feet.

According to the Mādhyandinas the quarter is severed at the cremation ground and thrown on the earth for the piśācas who live there. According to Keśavasvāmin and Nārāyaṇa the piece cut off from the corpse's garment should be kept by the son and put on the performer as if it were a sacred thread and worn in all the funeral ceremonies until the closing śrāddha of the twelfth day. (Caland A.T.B. p.12-16)

The homa which is mentioned in several of the ethnographic accounts of brahminical communities (Eth.1d) is obviously Vedic in origin. It does not appear in the Garuḍa Purāṇic ritual but instead appears to be replaced by a piṇḍa offering (Ved.1e,G.P.1d). As Caland points out[26], in Vedic ritual the homa offering takes the form of a normal oblation such as is offered at the new moon and full moon sacrifices, except that the normal oblation materials are replaced by the corpse. The correspondence between the corpse and the oblation material is made explicit in Baudhāyana. When it states that the corpse is laid behind the gārhapatya because that is where the oblation is poured out, Baudhāyana is referring to the ceremony at the new-moon and full-moon sacrifice, in which the oblation is poured over the sacrificial cakes which are placed to the rear of the gārhapatya fire. Similarly, when it states that the corpse is laid on the altar because that is where the oblation is laid it refers to the same ceremony, in which the sacrificial cakes are moved from

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[26] A.T.B. p.13-14

behind the gārhapatya fire after the oblation has been poured to be placed within the altar[27]. When the performer touches the right arm of the corpse, he therefore not only establishes that he is offering the oblation on behalf of the deceased (Eth.1d) but also that the deceased is himself that oblation.

The mantra offers the oblation to Yama as gatherer of men and their pathfinder rather than to Yama the lord of the hells and the terrible judge of the dead who appears in G.P.. In the Vedic hymns Yama is chiefly worshipped as the king of the blessed dead who assembles the flocks of the departed[28] and feasts with them in the highest heaven[29]. He rules over the dead because he was the first to die and thus the forerunner of all departed souls, their guide and pathfinder to the world beyond[30]. At this stage in Yama mythology, he is primarily seen as the god of the dead rather than the god of death. Although he is associated with death and his servants are said to wander among men thirsting for the breath of life[31], he does not represent death itself but rather presides over the world of people who have passed through death. Increasingly, however, he came to be identified with death

[27] Baudh.Śr.S. 1:14; 3:16-17; 20:12,14

[28] R.V. 10:14:1-2

[29] R.V. 10:14:8,10

[30] R.V. 10:13:4; 10:14:1-2

[31] R.V. 10:14:12

itself[32], and from the time of the early Brāhmaṇas onwards Yama is frequently called Death (Mṛtyu) or the Ender (Antaka). With the rise of ideas about reincarnation in the brahminical period, the jurisdiction of Yama as Death was extended. Whenever and wherever a man was born death would always claim him and would continue to claim him in each successive life. Vedic sacrificial ritual was seen as the one means by which man could defeat Death. By sacrificing to Yama in the proper manner the performer was loosened from the thousand snares by which Yama entangled the mortal in death[33], and so the performer could make his final exit at death having eluded the fate of recurrent deaths[34]. The homa to Yama, therefore, although addressing Yama as lord of heaven, is in fact intended to defeat Yama as lord of re-death. Thus from being king of a world in which the departed resided permanently after death, Yama came to preside over the Pitṛyāna, one of the two paths thought to be taken by the dead in late Vedic eschatology. The Pitṛyāna was the path leading to the moon and repeated rebirths, as opposed to the Devayāna, the path leading to the sun and liberation.

The ideas about hells in Epic-Purāṇic literature may have been influenced by Buddhism. According to Bhattacharji[35] the

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[32] Mait.Saṃ. 5:6; A.V. 6:28:3; 6:92:2; 6:66:2; 6:84:3; 18:7:8;

[33] A.V. 3:8:2

[34] Śat.Br. 10:4:3:1-10

[35] p.68

Buddhist scheme of the universe, as seen in the Mahāvastu, with its innumerable spheres, the lowest of which form the hells of torture and punishment, seeped into Hinduism and influenced the Epic-Purāṇic eschatology. Yama, who in the period of the Brāhmaṇas was lord of those who failed in their sacrificial duty and thus were condemned to continual re-death, became king of the hells; and the south, which from Vedic times had been associated with Yama and the dead became the region of the hells (Ved. 1c). During the Purāṇic period Yama also took on the role of Dharmarāja (King of order), who oversees the operation of karma, weighing all men's actions, determining their fruits and seeing that effect is proportionate to cause.

The practice of cleaning the entrails of the corpse ensures that the corpse contains no impure matter prior to cremation. It appears to represent an earlier practice which was abandoned by the time of the Vedic sūtras. The harrowing task of cutting the corpse open continued in the case of a woman dying in childbirth (Eth.7d).

The tying of the corpse's thumbs, as seen in the ethnography (Eth.1d), appears to be a practice which originated in Vedic times, as does the wearing of a piece of the corpse's clothing (referred to in the ethnography as the śeṣa). As in the ethnographic accounts, the śeṣa is either discarded after the cremation (Baudhāyana) or at the close of the twelfth day (Keśavasvāmin and Nārāyaṇa).

1e. The Funeral Procession.

The funeral procession is headed by the chief mourner who, according to the Taittirīya school, caries a fire brand lit from the gārhapatya fire. He is followed by near relatives carrying the śrauta fires in earthenware pots. If the deceased has founded several families then the aupāsana fire is also carried. In the case of an anāhitāgni the śrauta fires are omitted. The corpse comes next in the procession and no one is allowed to come between it and the fires. In one source the body is carried between the fires so that the āhavanīya is in front, the dakṣiṇāgni to the right and the gārhapatya behind it. The corpse should be carried by elderly servants (Baudhāyana), by an odd number of servants (Āśvalāyana), by an odd number of near or far relations who are of equal caste or by bearers (Harihara) by sons etc. (Karmapradīpa) or by the sapiṇḍas etc. (Anantayajvan). Other relatives carry the sacrificial utensils of the deceased. In some accounts the corpse, fire, sacrificial utensils and relatives may travel on a cart. After the corpse comes the sacrificial animal (anuṣtaraṇī, anuṣtaraṇikī) which should be led along with the left forefoot bound. According to Baudhāyana it should be a black cow which is old, dull and utterly bad. In Āśvalāyana and the Mānavas it is a self-coloured cow or goat while the Taittirīyas mention a rājagavī (a plump and superb specimen of a cow), which should be young, placid and fertile. It is stated in the later texts that when the dead person is anāhitāgni or has not

performed the animal sacrifice (paśūbandha) the rājagavī is replaced by a cow made of kuśa grass.

The deceased's distant relatives follow with the older males at the front, then the younger males and finally the women. The relatives should loosen their hair and strew dust on their heads. Most sources state that the mourners should wear only one garment. According to the Taittirīya school the sacred thread should be worn in the inauspicious direction. The priests bring up the rear of the funeral procession.

The procession leaves the village through the eastern or western gate (Harihara), while in later accounts it is stated that a brahmin should be taken out of the eastern gate, a kṣatriya from the northern gate, a vaiśya from the western gate and a śūdra from the southern gate. The corpse is carried south with its head foremost. According to the Śaunakins, when the corpse is taken up the verse,"Arise, hurry and go away, prepare a home in the heavenly space. There in the company of the Ancestors drink and indulge in Soma and honey", is recited. When it is carried away they recite the verse,"Go away and take a body, without limbs, without bones. Go to dissolution. Become a spirit which has gone to rest. Go to wherever on earth it has fallen to you. Go there". The Kaṭhas cover the way by strewing it with their clothes, small bits of iron, barley, jujube berries and fried corn while they recite hymns to Yama.

Three or four halts are made on the way. In the Taittirīya school a goat is sacrificed or rice is offered at each of the

halts and the relatives circumambulate the corpse anticlockwise and then clockwise, fanning it with their garments. In the younger generation of Taittirīyas these rites are accompanied by the mantra,"Burning the evil one away from us, Agni, burn well, burning the evil one away from us". Secondary Baudhāyana and Keśavasvāmin give the mantra:"A blissful, sweet-smelling wind should blow to you on the path, cooling the members well, cooling the flesh, cooling the bones. The Maruts[36] should take you to the blessed world". The Kaṭhas throw uncooked food from a pot at four stages along the way. The Mādhyandinas offer five piṇḍas on the journey: the first at the spot where the person died, the second at the house door, the bhūta piṇḍa to be offered at the resting place on the second half of the way, the wind piṇḍa to be offered when the procession reaches the cremation ground and the piṇḍa for a successful outcome placed in the corpse's hand. Occasionally a sixth piṇḍa is offered during the course of cremation on a spot where the gods reside.
(Caland A.T.B. p.19-30)

The order of the funeral procession corresponds closely with that found in the ethnography (Eth.1e), except that it includes women, who in the ethnographic material only appear to accompany the funeral processions in low caste and tribal communities (Eth.1e, Ved.8a.). As in the Garuḍa Purāṇic and ethnographic accounts (Eth.1e, G.P.1e), those who carry the corpse are related

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[36] The Maruts are the wind gods.

to the deceased. Relatives are suitable bearers because they are already subject to death pollution through their relationship with the deceased and thus are fit people to convey the impure corpse. At the same time they are of the same caste as the deceased and therefore protect it from contamination by contact with bearers of a lower caste. It is possible that in Vedic material ideas about the polluting nature of the corpse are less prominent than they appear to be in the ethnography (Eth.1e), since in some accounts it is carried on a cart rather than on a disposable bier.

The strewing of the way with cloths and foodstuffs is again a Vedic feature which is also found in the ethnographic accounts (Eth.1e). No explanation or mantra accompanies this practice in the Vedic material but the fact that it includes iron, which traditionally wards off evil spirits (Eth.1c,1e), suggests that as in the ethnogrphy it is intended to protect the corpse from the evil spirits which infest the way.

The halts along the way found in the ethnography and G.P. are clearly Vedic in origin. Circumambulation of the corpse in both the auspicious and inauspicious direction and the mantra which accompanies this rite in the younger generation Taittirīyas demonstrate the ambiguous status of the deceased: although he must be protected from ghosts and evil spirits, he is a ghost himself and as such must be driven away. A similar desire to drive the spirit of the deceased away is also seen in the mantras used during the Śaunakin procession. The mantra used by Secondary

Baudhāyana and Keśavasvāmin reflects not only the concern that the spirit of the deceased should leave, but that it should be cooled after its fiery ordeal on the cremation pyre; and when the relatives fan the body with their garments it would appear to be an anticipatory cooling ceremony. The deceased is not only a ghost which must be driven away but also a dead relative for whom the mourners desire the minimum of suffering. None of the Vedic accounts correspond with the explanation given by the Vaiṣṇavite brahmins (Eth.1e) who say that the halts are made in order to give the corpse time to recover. It would appear that the practice of offering piṇḍas along the way seen in the ethnography and G.P. also derives from Vedic practices, and it seems likely that in Vedic times, as in the explanations offered in G.P., the piṇḍas were intended as offerings to those spirits along the way which might contaminate the corpse or impede its progress.

Stage 2. Disposal Of The Corpse.

2a. Methods Of Disposal Of The Corpse.

According to Vedic funeral rites the corpse is cremated. The cremation ground is used for the cremation itself, for the interment of bones after cremation and for the śrāddha offerings to the Ancestors. Whereas the devayajana (the place where the gods are given offerings) is situated to the east of water, a river, road or mountain and should have a beautiful view to the east, the śmaśāna (cremation ground) should be situated to the west of water with a good view to the west. The devayajana is inclined to the north or north east but the cremation ground is by most sources said to incline to the south or west. The various traditions are not unanimous about the direction in which the pyre should be laid: in some the funeral pyre is pointed from north west to south east with the points of the logs to the south east while in others the pyre is constructed in the east with the points of the logs laid towards the south. The sacred fires are set up so that the pyre is situated between the gārhapatya and the āhavanīya, at the spot where in the customary vihāra the vedi (altar) is situated. If the deceased was an anāhitāgni then only the aupāsana fire is set up at the cremation ground and this is established to the east of the pyre.
(Caland A.T.B. p.30-32)

The Vedic texts, like G.P., envisage no method of corpse disposal other than cremation. The body is looked upon as an

oblation which, like all oblations, must be offered into the fire. As Malamoud points out[1], this is a sacrifice in which the sacrificer is not represented by a victim but is the victim himself. The sacrificial nature of the cremation is indicated by the fact that the pyre takes the place of the altar on which the offerings are laid in normal sacrificial ritual. The theory of cremation as a sacrifice is based on the cosmogonic myth of the Puruṣa Sūkta[2], in which Cosmic Man (Puruṣa), born in the beginning and consisting of whatsoever has been and whatsoever will be, forms the offering material (havis) of a sacrifice which creates the visible and invisible universe. It was this myth which formed the foundation of the theory of sacrifice as propounded in the Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇa version of Puruṣa is Prajāpati (Lord of Creatures), whose limbs and faculties are offered up to form the whole cosmos from the gods and Asuras down to the tiniest particle of inert matter[3]. The Brāhmaṇas' exposition of sacrificial practice is based on the correspondence between Prajāpati and the various sacrificial implements and materials. Sacrificial ritual is a microcosmic repetition of this self-offering, for the sacrifice of Cosmic Man is seen as a continuous process requiring the sacrificial ritual of mortals to build up Prajāpati's dismembered body again and again, enabling

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[1] p.108

[2] R.V. 10:90

[3] Śat.Br. 6:1:1:2-5

him to keep offering himself up for the renewal of the universe[4]. As sacrificial ritual is the microcosmic equivalent of the sacrifice which creates the cosmos, so man is the microcosmic equivalent of Prajāpati, offering sacrificial materials in lieu of his own body. The culmination of the sacrificer's life is therefore the self-sacrifice for which all other sacrifices and sacrificial materials have been substitutes; it is the microcosmic repetition of Prajāpati's macrocosmic self-offering. Furthermore, through the identification between Prajāpati and the sacrificer the performer is able to escape re-death (Ved.1d). Prajāpati is the personified totality of all being, including space and time, and thus is Lord of the Year (the lowest complete revolution of time taken to represent the infinity of time). Prajāpati is therefore also associated with death as well as creation,"The year, doubtless, is the same as death, for he it is who by means of day and night destroys the life of mortal beings and then they die"[5]. The performer who becomes Prajāpati through the performance of sacrificial ritual therefore becomes the Creator and Lord of Death rather than its victim and thus escapes the circle of birth, death, rebirth and re-death (Ved.1d).

<u>2b. Rites Concerning The Spirits And The Functionaries Of The Cremation Ground.</u>

According to the Mādhyandinas, a quarter of the cloth covering the corpse is severed at the cremation ground and thrown

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[4] Śat.Br. 6:2:2:21

[5] Śat.Br. 10:4:3:1

on the earth for the _piśācas_ who live there. The performer clears the place chosen for the cremation with a _śamī_, _palāśa_ or _varaṇa_ branch whilst reciting, according to most schools, "Go forth, go away, disperse from here. Yama gives him a resting place adorned by days, waters and nights." Gautama, Vaikhānasa and Secondary Baudhāyana also have the mantra, "Leave here, you dead (_pretas_) of an earlier age". The branch is then thrown away in a southerly direction. In some schools the cremation ground is further prepared in the case of an _āhitāgni_ by pouring sesame water or seed into three holes at three spots on the prepared ground with the words,"To Yama, to the Lord of the cremation ground, to the deceased (the Ancestors) _svadhā_ _namaḥ_! To Kāla, the Lord of the cremation ground, to the first (the Ancestors) _svadhā_ _namaḥ_! To Mṛtyu, the Lord of the cremation ground, to the deceased (the Ancestors) _svadhā_ _namaḥ_![6]"

In the four Taittirīyas the placing of the corpse on the pyre is preceded by the slaughter or the release of the _rājagavī_. If the dead person is not _paśubandhayājin_ (has not performed the animal sacrifice) it is temporarily released, otherwise it is slaughtered with the words,"O you companion of man, we wipe off our evil, so that none of us may come here before his time", and "O you companion of man, I take your life from you, may your body go to the earth, may your juice go to the Ancestors". When the corpse has been laid on the pyre the beast is cut up. The two kidneys are laid on the corpse's two hands, the left in the left

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[6] Yama, Kāla and Mṛtyu are three personifications of death.

hand and the right in the right hand. The kalpa books of the Kauśika, Āśvalāyana and Śāṅkhāyana schools accompany the rite with the verse, "On the straight path flee the two hounds, Saramā's brood, from the spotted four-eyed ones, and come to the gift-rich Ancestors who enjoy themselves as Yama's companions". If the beast is set free it should nevertheless have the kidneys removed from its back while it is still alive. The heart of the beast is laid on the heart of the corpse and the tongue on the mouth. The face of the corpse is covered with the omentum in which holes have been made and in most rituals this is accompanied by,"I cover you with the cow as protection from Agni, I wrap you with its fat and marrow, so that the bold, raging, violent one may not powerfully enfold you to burn you". According to the Mānava school if the cow is not killed, a milky food should be cooked in the gārhapatya and a slice of this used in the same way as the omentum. Finally the skin of the beast on which the feet, tail and head have been put is spread on the corpse so that the head rests on the head of the corpse etc..

According to the Śaunakins the chief mourner lights the pyre with the words,"Burn him not, do him no harm, O Agni; do not dismember the skin and his limbs. When you have completely cooked him, O Jātavedas, you must hand him over to the Ancestors." According to the Taittirīyas and Śaunakins a goat is tethered to the pyre so that it can run away and its flight is accompanied by the mantra,"The raging flames which you have, O Agni, with which you fill heaven and the realm of air, they should pursue the goat

which flees. Please with the other benevolent (flames) prepare him (the corpse) uninjured".

A series of ahutis (oblations) are poured into the fire as the corpse burns, dedicated to the guardians of the way and Agni. In the Taittirīya school, excepting the younger generation Taittirīyas, a further offering is made to Agni with the words,"You here (O Agni) have originated from him (the deceased); from this (the fire) you (O dead person) have likewise originated; round you is his birthplace. You, Agni Vaiśvānara, the son (of him) making ready a place for the father, lead him to the world of the god-fearing." The Śaunakins make a series of offerings to Yama while reciting mantras in which Yama is addressed as the one who opened the way for the departed and is asked, "to leave us among the living, to live a long time." In the Taittirīya school a hymn to Yama is recited during the burning of the corpse in which he is addressed in similar terms to those used by the Śaunakins.

(Caland A.T.B p.33-4,40-2,54-5,60-72)

The purity of the corpse as a sacrifice is protected by an exorcistic rite which drives away evil spirits and the ghosts of those who have died previously. In addition to the exorcistic rite, the Mādhyandinas give part of the corpse cloth to the piśācas, presumably in order to appease them. In the ethnography a similar attempt to appease the demons of the cremation ground is seen in the practice of burying a piece of the corpse flesh

for the corpse demon (Eth.2b). At the same time as it is necessary to protect the dead person from evil spirits it is also necessary for the performers to be protected from the evil with which the corpse threatens them, thus the relatives ask that the sacrifice of the rājagavī may remove the evil of death so that none of them die before their time. Yama and his messengers have succeeded in claiming a victim and the corpse represents a channel through which the dead may claim the living relatives of the deceased. Thus, the hymn of Yama recited in the Taittirīyas during the burning of the corpse states, "Yama's messengers, brown with broad noses, insatiably track the throng of men. They must leave us to live our lives. Please let the son look at the light for a while longer".

The cremation ground is the territory of Yama and the Ancestors and so the performers of the funeral acknowledge their sovereignty over the śmaśāna and gain their cooperation by making offerings to them. Yama appears in the grim aspect of Mṛtyu (Death) and Kāla (Time) during the preparation of the cremation ground, but at the burning of the corpse he is also addressed as the pathfinder who opened the way to the world beyond. According to Brāhmaṇa theory the sacrifice of the corpse at the funeral is intended to defeat Yama by connecting the deceased with the self-sacrifice which created the cosmos (Ved.2a), but older ideas about Yama as the one who opened the way and rules over heaven (Ved.1d) persist in the ritual. Older ideas about Yama's servants as representing the terrible aspects of death which the deceased

must escape in order to reach Yama's heavenly world (Ved.1d) also persist in the offering of the kidneys. It is possible that the kidneys represent placatory offerings which will enable the deceased to pass to Yama's heaven untroubled, just as the ten gifts in G.P. are said to please Yama's servants so that they give the deceased easy passage to Yama's kingdom (G.P.1c). G.P contains no equivalent of the rājagavī ceremony and it seems likely that the ten last gifts took over from the kidney offering as a means of placating the dogs of Yama. In the ethnography the practice of feeding dogs also appears to be used to perform this function (Eth.4c).

The connection between the deceased and the primeval sacrifice (Ved.2a) can be seen in the offering to Agni, where the fire is said to be born from the deceased and the deceased is said to be born from the fire, for this is a microcosmic version of the relationship between Agni and Prajāpati. Agni is born of Prajāpati as a result of his self-sacrifice but Prajāpati is restored after his disintegration through Agni[7], so they have the paradoxical relationship of being both father and son to each other. At the cremation the funeral fire originates from Agni but the deceased is reborn from Agni Vaiśvānara in the form of an oblation, which enables him to be led by the fire to the world of the Ancestors.

Vaiśvānara is the manifestation of Agni which represents the sun and man's control over light and warmth, but the success of

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[7] Śat.Br.6:1:2:26

the cremation ceremony depends on the correct handling of two of Agni's other manifestations: that of Agni Jātavedas, the fire which cooks and transports oblations to the gods and in return brings blessings to men, and Agni Kravyāda (Devourer of the uncooked), the terrible destructive flesh-consuming aspect of fire. As in the animal sacrifice, in order that the corpse should be cooked as an oblation by the Jātavedas the powerful devouring flame of the Kravyāda, which would otherwise destroy it, has to be controlled[8]. The rājagavī which has been sacrificed as an offering to the Ancestors and whose kidneys protect the corpse from Yama's hounds performs the third function of protecting the corpse from Agni Kravyāda by providing an animal substitute for the body. The animal organs are laid over the equivalent human organs so that the Kravyāda fire destroys the rājagavī, leaving the Jātavedas to cook the corpse underneath. The corpse is further protected by the goat offering which Agni Kravyāda is asked to pursue in place of the corpse. Reference to an animal offering used to cover and protect the deceased can be found in the R.V. funeral hymns[9], as can the use of the goat offering[10], suggesting that they are practices of some antiquity. The use of the rājagavī and the goat seems to have died out after the sūtra period. The rājagavī ceremony was probably abandoned as part of the general decline in animal sacrifice which accompanied the

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[8] Malamoud p.108

[9] 10:16:7

[10] R.V. 10:16:4

spread of vegetarianism as an ideal. Mānava provides a milk substitute, but there is no evidence for a vegetarian equivalent of the protecting animal sacrifice in G.P., possibly because the distinction between Agni Jātavedas and Agni Kravyāda has become blurred (G.P.2b). There are, however, rituals in the ethnography which might be interpreted as vegetarian equivalents of the covering animal; however, the participants do not give this as an explanation (Eth.2b).

2c. Offerings To The Corpse.

All schools place gold pieces on the seven openings (prāṇāyatanāni) of the head; if no gold is available, a drop of melted butter (ājya)is used. In some schools this is done without words while in others the seven great words (bhūḥ, bhuvaḥ, suvaḥ, mahaḥ, janaḥ, tapaḥ, and satyam) are used. The order in which the pieces are placed depends on the school, though in most the mouth is covered first. Baudhāyana then offers a series of ājyas poured over first the right and then the left eye four times, with the words,"It climbs up towards the light of the gods, Mitra and Varuṇa's and Agni's eye. Svāhā!" and "The sun fills the air, earth and heaven. It is the soul of the living and inanimate world. Svāhā!" As opposed to the Baudhāyana offering, the Mānavas place a sacrifice into the mouth of the corpse with the mantra, "First into existence came the golden embryo (hiraṇyagarbha). Born through the sole master of the cosmos, he establishes the earth and the heavens. Tell us to which god we should bring the offering". The Rāṇayanīyas and Mādhyandinas pour water on the

corpse with a continuous stream of butter from the feet to the face and the butter dish is then cast away at the head end. In Secondary Baudhāyana, Vaikhānasa and Gautama curds, honey, milk, sesame seeds and rice are poured out in the same way as the butter. The offerings to the corpse are followed by the laying of the deceased's sacrificial utensils on and around the body (the pātracayanam). This does not apply in the case of an anāhitāgni except that some of the more recent sources prescribe that utensils for the domestic sacrifices (pākayajñas) be laid with the corpse. According to Āpastamba Kalpa-sūtra, "After establishing the fires, so long as life lasts and indeed after death the owner should be followed by the sacrificial instruments. Therefore they are laid on the pyre and around him; then, so it is said, he enters the heaven world immediately with the sacrificial implements." Implements are laid on the ears, two nasal openings, the neck, chest, hands, testicles, thighs etc., the choice of instrument for each of these positions depending on the school. As the Śaunakins lay implements on the head they recite, "The juhū carries to heaven, the upabhṛt to the air realm, the dhruvā to the foundation, the earth. The heaven worlds are those to which the fats travel, to which they must trickle with the offering. Mount dhruvā, the all-giving earth. Rise up into the air realm upabhṛt. Juhū go to heaven with the offering and through the sruva calf milk all the fullness of the heaven world." The remaining implements are gathered together and put in one place on the pyre, except according to the four Taittirīyas

and Vaikhānasa, while the earthen implements are either thrown in water or put on the pyre. The iron and brass implements, according to Baudhāyana and Kātyāyana, are given away to a brahmin.

(Caland A.T.B. p.47-54)

Gold is used as a method of purification during Brāhmaṇa rituals[11] but it seems likely from the form of the ceremony that this is not its primary purpose here. The ceremony of placing gold pieces on the facial openings can also be seen in the Agnicayana (the building of the great fire-altar to bring about the reconstruction of the dismembered Lord of creatures). Over a period of a year (the unit which represents the infinity of time), the layers of the altar are arranged so as to represent earth, air and heaven, while at the same time the fire pan is fashioned in such a way as to be a miniature copy of the three worlds. During the construction of the fire pan the performer places in it the heads of various sacrificial victims to represent these worlds. Prajāpati fashioned the animals of the worlds out of his vital airs[12] and through seizing them by the outlets of the vital airs (their heads) he can restore their essence to himself[13]. Animals are therefore slaughtered and their heads placed in the fire pan, but the slaughter of the victims

[11] Śat.Br. 12:8:1:15,22

[12] Śat.Br.7:5:2:9

[13] Śat.Br.7:5:2:4,5

causes the vital airs to go out of them[14] and so their heads are not the proper receptacles of the vital essence. The performer therefore restores the vital airs by thrusting seven gold chips into their facial orifices[15]. It seems possible that placing gold pieces in the facial openings at cremation restores the vital essence which departed at death, so that the corpse represents a true self-sacrifice in the manner of Prajāpati. Gold is indeed said to be the vital essence and the immortality of Prajāpati, and the creator of the cosmos is represented on the fire-altar of the Agnicayana by a golden figure because when the gods reconstructed him they gave him the form hiraṇya (gold)[16], "But that form of his is the vital air[17]." The corpse is identified with the golden form of Prajāpati in the ājyas which follow the placing of the gold pieces on the face. The gold/immortality/Prajāpati complex also contains fire, light and the sun[18], and through placing gold on the face the deceased is also associated with the sun, as he is in the mantra accompanying the ājyas, and hence with the Devayāna since," The sun is the final goal of the deceased[19]."

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[14] Śat.Br. 7:5:2:9

[15] Śat.Br. 7:5:2:9-12

[16] Clearly an allusion to the golden germ hiraṇyagarbha, (Śat.Br.11:1:6:1) from which the Puruṣa, creator of the universe arose.

[17] Śat.Br. 7:4:1:16-18

[18] Śat.Br. 6:7:1:2; 7:4:1:15

[19] Śat.Br. 1:9:3:15

The self-sacrifice of the deceased is completed by the immolation of the sacrificial tools along with their owner. They are a symbol of his life as a sacrificer and hence demonstrate his fitness to be offered in sacrifice on the model of Prajapati. They are also the implements by which sacrifices are effectively dispatched on their way to heaven and in the mantras they are asked to perform the same function for their owner. The deceased thus offers himself as a sacrifice using his own sacrificial tools. The decline in the number of people qualified to perform śrauta sacrifice is seen in the adaptation of the rite in later sources to those brahmins who only maintain the domestic fire. The continued decline of the sacrificial system probably accounts for the fact that G.P. makes no reference to the rite. It appears from the ethnography that in those relatively rare cases where brahmins are agnihotrins (i.e. maintain the sacrificial fires) the Vedic rite of burning the corpse with his sacrificial instruments continues to be practised[20], but for those who have only the domestic fire it appears to have been abandoned, probably because the domestic fire tends to be used only on special occasions and not for ordinary sacrificial worship (Eth.1d).

2d. The Pot-Breaking Ceremony, Skull-Cracking And Rites Of Separation.

According to the Vedic sources, at its arrival in the cremation ground the corpse carries in its hand a symbol

[20] e.g. Stevenson p.150

appropriate to its varṇa: a brahmin carries a staff or piece of gold, a kṣatriya a bow and a vaiśya a cattle goad or a jewel. The object is taken by the chief mourner from the corpse's hand with a mantra appropriate to the deceased's varṇa. With minor variations according to school, the chief mourner recites for a brahmin,"I take away the staff/gold from the hand of the corpse together with the knowledge of the Vedas to be our glory and strength. You are on the other side; as we are here. Let us great heroes conquer every foe's attack"; for a kṣatriya he recites,"I take the bow from the hand of the corpse to be our protection, glory and defiance. You are on the other side etc.", and for a vaiśya,"I take the jewel/goad from the corpse's hand to be our luck, domicile, welfare and strength etc.".

Before and during the cremation water is poured on the pyre. The performer's spouse or son stands at the feet of the corpse and places on his or her head a circlet of darbha grass on which a pitcher of water is then placed; alternatively, the jug may be placed on the left shoulder. A hole is knocked in the pitcher from behind with an axe or a smooth stone by its bearer or by the adhvaryu priest or by one of the near relatives. The bearer circumambulates the pyre in the anticlockwise direction and each time he or she reaches the feet of the corpse another hole is smashed in the pitcher. After the third hole has been made three mantras should be spoken:"The sweet water should in this world (the second time 'in the skies', the third time 'in the heaven world') never dry up for you, but should trickle down", with some

schools reciting a variant of these mantras. In the last circumambulation with the dribbling pot the bearer throws the pitcher from his head (shoulder) with his face turned to the north (Baudhāyana Paddhati). The pitcher should be thrown so that it falls behind. If it falls in front the bearer receives bad fortune and if it falls to the side the whole funeral fire has to be started again. In some sources the performer then looses the binding on the feet of the corpse, pours butter on them, touches the corpse with a living plant, branch or piece of gold and looks at the sun, a cow or a brahmin.
(Caland A.T.B. p.45-47,49-54)

The ceremony of the removal of the varṇa symbol appears in neither G.P. nor the ethnography. It appears to be a rite of separation in which the chief mourner relieves the corpse of the symbol of its duties associated with varṇa and hence relieves it of its worldly responsibilities, promising to maintain and protect the tradition himself, thus taking over his father's place. It is interesting that the sūtras describe a ritual which has variations according to varṇa since in all other ceremonies the brahmin authors appear to be writing for brahmins alone and the only distinctions in ritual are those made between brahmins who maintain the three sacred śrauta fires and those who maintain only the domestic fire.

The pot-breaking ceremony seems closely to resemble the descriptions in the ethnography. The mantras suggest that it is

intended to provide water for the deceased to drink during his fiery ordeal. The fact that the pot must be thrown behind the person performing the circumambulations suggests that this is also a rite of separation. It is interesting that the corpse's feet are untied after this rite has been performed, suggesting that it is safe to remove the bonds which prevent the deceased from returning home after the separation between the living and the dead has been achieved through the smashing of the water pot. The fact that the performer ends with the purificatory practice of looking at the sun, a cow or a brahmin, suggests that he is removing the heavy pollution incurred before the barrier between the living and the dead could be established through the rite of separation.

2e.Protective Measures Against Ghosts.

In the Taittirīyas three long holes are dug to the west of the cremation ground. They are filled to the brim with water from an odd number of jugs and then stones and gravel are thrown in. The relatives get into the holes, the youngest first, and the following mantra is recited,"Touch the stones contained in the abundant (water). You friends get up and cross over. We leave the bad things behind here: we would wish to attain better things!". In Āśvalāyana the relatives cut a knee-deep hole to the north of the <u>āhavanīya</u> and lay an <u>avakā</u> plant etc. in it. The relatives all turn left and go away without looking back. This is accompanied by the mantra, "The living have here separated from the dead, our invitation to the gods has become auspicious for us

today, we are gone forward to dance and laugh, possessing longer life hereafter[21]". In the Taittirīyas two palāśa and śamī branches are stuck in the earth outside the holes with their two points bound with string or a piece of grass. The relatives go through the arch with the youngest in front and the performer recites the following: "The purifier of the god Savitṛ, the one with a thousand rays spreading out, with which he once healed the sick Indra, with them I purify my whole body." The last to pass through (and thus the oldest) throws the two branches away and having cut the string or grass with a knife recites,"The branches, which through the realm of the dead are polluted by death, desiring the king, go there. You should all have been purified through Dhātṛ's sieve, with children I bring glory to join us." In Gautama, Secondary Baudhāyana and Vaikhānasa two sapiṇḍas or a man in the service of the king hold out a branch, grass or string with the words,"Climb not through (them again)", to which the relatives answer,"We will not climb through again".

In the Śaunakin school the performer gives each of the relatives seven pebbles and they leave the pyre without looking behind them, strewing the stones with their left hands held downward. This procedure is accompanied by the mantra,"The evil is spreading away from us". In Śāṅkhāyana on the other hand the mourners exit from the cremation ground after advancing in the northerly direction, while the chief mourner recites the two verses,"When you have gone, wiping away the footprint of death,

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[21] R.V. 10:18:3

possessing hereafter a longer life, so should you be rich in children and possessions, pure and clean and worthy of sacrifice[22]". The mourners return home with the youngest members of the party leading and the eldest bringing up the rear.
(Caland A.T.B. p.72-76)

In the funeral procession the mourners go to the cremation ground with the eldest in front and the youngest following behind (Ved.1e) and this represents the normal order in which ceremonies are performed with the older participants preceding the younger. When the mourners leave the cremation ground, however, they enter water, pass through the branches and return home in the inverse order. The inversion of normal order, which can also be seen in the Taittirīya account of the fanning of the corpse and the touching of the rājagavī, demonstrates the inauspicious nature of the occasion and the disruption of normal order that death brings about. In the exit from the cremation ground it seems to have a further significance, however, in that an inversion of the outward procession means that those who approached the cremation ground first leave it last:,this preserves the correct sequence of proximity to death if all live out their full life-spans.

The ceremonies accompanying the exit from the cremation ground are both purificatory and exorcistic. The mourners bathe and appeal to the purificatory nature of the sun to drive death pollution from them, for if the relatives return home with the

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[22] R.V. 10:18:2

pollution of the cremation on them, the world of death and the dead can extend through them beyond its proper boundaries of the cremation ground and back to the village, where it may claim the mourners and spread to other members of the living community. The evil of death following the mourners home is also averted by their departure through a disposable gateway of branches. After they pass through the archway it is destroyed and its components sent back to the world of the dead, so that none of the undesirable denizens of the funeral ground may follow the mourners home. The mantras accompanying the exit from the funeral ground emphasize the separate nature of the worlds of the living and the dead. Although the mourners have entered the dangerous world of the dead in order to perform the cremation they do not belong there but will return to the world of dance, laughter, long life, possessions and children. In the Śaunakin mantra the implication is that long life, possessions and children come as a direct result of the mourners' having entered the domain of death for, paradoxically, although by venturing into the world of the dead the mourners risk becoming victims of death, it is the dead who are particularly associated with the gift of long life, possessions and children[23].

Whereas in the ethnography several communities explain the mourners passing through the branches as a method by which they prevent the ghost of the deceased returning to his old home and troubling the relatives (Eth.2e), in the sūtras the rites of the

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[23] R.V. 10:15:7

exit from the cremation appear to prevent the return of death and evil spirits in general rather than the ghost of the dead man in particular.

Stage 3. Rites Concerning The Return Home, The Collection Of The Bones Or Attention To The Grave And Associated Offerings.

3a. Bathing After The Funeral And The Start Of Mourning Restrictions.

On their way back from the cremation ground the relatives stop at a place where there is some water and immerse themselves wearing only an undergarment. While in the water they face south, loosen their hair and strew dust on their heads (Baudhāyana). In the four Taittirīya schools this is accompanied by the mantra, "Dhātṛ, cleanse us, Savitṛ cleanse us with Agni's heat, Sūrya's gaze", while Śāṅkhāyana prescribes the mantras R.V. 9:4 and R.V. 10:9. In some schools the relatives make a water offering with the left hand over the right, naming the family name and the personal name of the deceased. In Śāṅkhāyana the relatives climb out of the water with the following verse: "The water, the mother should purify us, the clarified butter with butter should purify, the divinities should take away all dirt. I climb through the water clean and pure". In the three younger generation Taittirīyas, Gautama, Vaikhānasa and Secondary Baudhāyana the relatives bend their left knees and squeeze out their garments, after they have folded them three times with their hands in the position for offerings to the Ancestors, with the words, "N.N. I give this (garment-) water to you". This is performed three times but the family name is only given once. In later sources the garment water and sesame water are first given at the entrance to the house, mostly over a stone. Baudhāyana and

Śāṅkhāyana prescribe an upasthānam (worship of a deity for the sake of protecting the performer from an early death etc.) by the son with the words,"We are now from darkness" (Baudhāyana), or"The bright eye of the gods, which there rises, may we look (at it) for a hundred years, may we live a hundred years". The mourning relatives sit in a shaded spot and give vent to their grief while older members of the party give comfort through the narration of uplifting stories or the Yama hymn. From then on the relatives should not mourn lest their children be tormented by hunger. The relatives do not return to the village until they see a star in the heavens, which the Śaunakins greet with"The star shines and its lustre makes me happy".

The relatives may not enter the house until they have grasped various prescribed purificatory substances. They chew three nimba or picumanda leaves; they touch fire, in one Vājasaneyi school with the words,"The fire bestows protection on us"; water, cow dung, a dūrvā shoot, a śamī branch with the words,"The śamī removes evil"; a stone with the words "With a stone may I be made fast", and barley with the words "Barley, keep evil far away from us". They then step over the stone and are free to enter the house. The Śaunakins enter the house with the words,"The Nissalā, the cheeky Dhiṣana, Ekavādya and Jighatsu, all the children of Caṇḍa, we destroy along with Dānu[1]." They step into the house with the speech,"Bearing juice, bringing possessions, offering up the right, greeting with

[1] The names of various demons.

friendly and favourable glance, I make this house favourably disposed towards me. Remain righteous, fear nothing from me". In Vaikhānasa the house is then scorched with a firebrand and purified with cow dung.

The relatives should take up their normal occupations again but observe āśauca (impurity) for a period of six to twelve days depending on their relationship to the deceased. From the time of death they fast and refrain from drinking water until the same time the following day, and during the whole period of aśauca they sleep on the floor, cease from studying the Veda and refrain from all domestic offerings. The offerings essential for the three sacred fires (vaitāna), however, should be performed. If the deceased was the mourner's father, mother or religious teacher he should abstain from sexual intercourse for a year or at least twelve days and sleep on the floor (Baudhāyana).
(Caland A.T.B. p.76-9)

It is interesting that while in the ethnography the Vaiṣṇava brahmins (Eth.3a) see the immersion of the relatives after the cremation as refreshing the spirit of the deceased after its fiery ordeal, there is no indication of this in the Vedic material. The mantras suggest that the bath is primarily in order to purify the relatives after the most polluting phase of the ritual and there is no suggestion that they are acting as representatives of the deceased, cooling the ghost by cooling themselves. It is probable that the concept seen in the

ethnography developed from the libation offered to the deceased at the time of the bath, though in the Vedic material it seems to have no significance beyond that of constituting the first of the offerings made to the deceased during the ten days of primary pollution.

As in the ceremonies associated with the exit from the cremation ground (Ved.2e), the mantras accompanying the upasthāna emphasize the separate nature of the worlds of the living and the dead at a time when the distinction between the two domains has become blurred. The recitation of texts to comfort the mourners is a feature seen in G.P., where the appropriate text for the occasion is said to be G.P itself (G.P.3a). In the ethnography too the G.P. is seen as the appropriate text for recitation, though the terrifying nature of the text has caused the practice to fall into disuse (Eth.4d).

As Caland points out[2], the ceremonies surrounding the entry into the house both purify the mourners so that the house is not contaminated by the relatives and at the same time remove the pollution caused by the death in the house and drive away the demons which have been attracted and gained access to the abode of the living through that death (Ved.2e). It would appear from the mantra associated with the stone that its original purpose in the rites of entry into the house was to provide a symbol of permanence, assuring the mourners of their continued place in the world of the living. The fact that the mourners step over the

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[2] A.T.B. p.79

stone before they enter the house suggests that it may also represent a barrier, like the branches at the cremation ground (Ved.2e), which prevents the invasion of the forces of death into the world of the living. In the later sources the stone also seems to have become a focus for offerings to the deceased: although the practice of giving sustenance to the deceased as represented by a stone is not mentioned in G.P., it is extremely important in the ethnography (Eth.4a), where the stone is not merely a channel through which the dead person receives offerings but a temporary body for the ghost until a new one can be constructed from piṇḍas.

The mourning restrictions observed by the relatives correspond closely with those seen in G.P. and the ethnography, except that in the Vedic account the relatives take up their normal occupations immediately after the cremation, while in the ethnography normal activities are suspended and the mourners remain in social isolation until the end of primary pollution (Eth.4h).

3b.Lamp And Basket Ceremonies.

In the more recent sources the spot where the person breathed his last and died is addressed with the same mantras as are recited at the entry to the house (Ved.3a). In later Kauthuma sources a lamp is placed every evening on the place where the daily piṇḍa is offered (Ved.4d) with the words,"N.N., I give you

a lamp, that with it you may go through the terrible darkness which prevails on the way to Yama's city".
(Caland A.T.B. p.79,82)

It would appear that ceremonies associated with the spot where the person breathed their last and the offering of a lamp are both late developments in Vedic ritual. The mantra accompanying the lamp ceremony suggests that the practice can be linked with the rise of epic and Purāṇic ideas about death as a journey through terrible darkness to the city of Yama, lord of the hells, superseding the Vedic view that Yama presides over the heavenly world of the departed dead (Ved.1d). As ideas about the terrible darkness of the journey after death became widely accepted, so the ritual means to alleviate it also became available to mourners through lamp offerings (G.P.3b). Interestingly, in the ethnography the Chitpāvan brahmins interpret the principal lamp gift, made immediately after the cremation, as a means of cooling the eyes of the mourners, although explanations stating that lamp gifts light the way of the deceased are more common (Eth.1d). Although no such explanation is given in the Vedic material, the spot where the person died becomes the site for the primary light offering in G.P. (G.P.3b) and the ethnography (Eth.3b).

The repetition of the exorcistic rite which accompanies entry into the house exorcises the area where the forces of death actually entered the world of the living. In G.P. and the

ethnography no such exorcistic rite is mentioned, but the spot where the person died is to be spread with cow dung, a purificatory measure which drives away the impure forces of death and provides a ritually pure area on which the lamp offering may be placed and food offerings to the deceased may be made (Eth.4c).

The Vedic material contains no evidence of the tribal and low caste practice of placing a basket over the ash-strewn area and later looking for footprints of the deceased (Eth.3b).

3c. 'Cooling The Cemetery' And The Bone Collection.

The day on which the bone collection ceremony is held varies according to the school; for those which stipulate a fixed time the third or fourth day is usual but several schools leave a fair amount of freedom in timing, the greatest choice being offered in Baudhāyana, which allows the morning after the cremation, the third, fifth, seventh, ninth or eleventh day.

The bone collection ceremony commences with the performer sprinkling the bones with milk and water by means of a branch which is carried carefully to avoid its being scorched in the fire. In the Taittirīyas the sprinkling is accompanied by the words,"Fire we kindled you, made you indeed as a bull. Here we sooth you again, with water and sweet milk".In the Śaunakin school this is accompanied by the words,"Down from heaven, to the river reeds lower yourself, o fire god, of water you are indeed the gall. The (plants) which you, Agni, burn, which I sow anew, here I wash śāṇḍadūrvā, kiyambu and vyalkaśā. Mist should be

soothing you, properly cooling you the mature; make cool, you who live in the coolness, make fresh you who live in the freshness, you frog, happy in the water, and extinguish the fire properly". The Śaunakins cut the plants mentioned in the mantras, though what is done with them afterwards is not explained. Similar mantras are employed in the Taittirīya school to accompany the sprinkling of the bones.

The pyre is sprinkled with water from an odd number of water jugs and the bones are gathered up by the chief mourner (Kauśika), an odd number of males or females of an advanced age (Āśvalāyana), a party of mourners led by the deceased's wife (Baudhāyana) or an odd number of women (usually five),"who can have no more children" (younger generation Taittirīyas). In the Taittirīya school the woman (or women) ties the fruit of the aubergine plant onto the left hand with two threads, one dark blue, one red. She then places her left foot on a stone, wipes her hand once with an apāmārga plant and finally with her eyes closed takes up the bones with her left hand. The five women stand by the pyre with the first by the head of the departed, the second some way below, and so on with the last standing in front of the feet. The first starts and takes a skull bone or one of the teeth, saying,"Arise and gather up this body. Now you should leave bones without limbs. Go where you always wanted to go on earth. May the god Savitṛ take you thither". The second woman takes one of the bones of the shoulder or arm with the quarter verse,"Here is one of yours"; the third takes one of the bones

from the ribs or the hips with the quarter verse, "Now here is one"; the fourth takes a bone from the thighs or buttocks with the quarter verse,"Merge with the third light"; and the fifth takes a bone from one of the legs with the rest of the verse,"At the laying down may there be peace for the corpse, beloved by the gods in the highest realm". When the collection is performed by one person only, a bone is taken from each area of the body in turn. The bones thus gathered are immediately put into a pot or urn and the process is repeated until all have been gathered up. The kalpas of the Taittirīyas and Gautama also state that the ashes of the deceased should be gathered up, mixed with stones and pressed into the shape of a man. In the rites of the Rāṇayanīyas and Mādhyandinas the ash heap is covered with mud and then an avakā plant is laid on it.

Finally, if the deceased has not consecrated śrauta fires, the urn is deposited at a pure spot: in a pit at the root of a tree, in a permanent reliquary, in a stream, tīrtha or in the sea. In the Taittirīyas the urn is picked up after the bone collection with the words,"Arise, go forth and hurry, prepare you a home in highest heaven. You should meet with Yama and Yamī. Climb there to the pinnacle of the highest heaven". The Śaunakins bury the urn in a hole at the base of the tree with the words,"The tree should not restrict you, neither should the great god earth. Among the Ancestors find a place. Be happy in the kingdom of Yama", and the hole is covered with the words,"Give, earth, offer to him this soft and gentle bed, confer on him

protection and space". The interment of the urn is completed by the performer's repeating the upasthāna of the cremation ceremony (Ved.2b).

According to the Taittirīyas, if the deceased is an āhitāgni and has performed havir yajñas[3] during his lifetime, the bones are tipped out into a pit which has been consecrated as if for the havir yajñas by being strewn with sand and darbha grass with the tips pointing south. The bones are tipped out with the words,"In the everlasting sap of the earth, in the sap of the plants, in the highest heaven, in the height of redness, I place you, o N.N.".

If the deceased has performed the soma sacrifice, then according to the Taittirīyas he is re-cremated. Certain of the sacrificial implements, including the grinding stones, are kept back at the cremation and when the body is burnt a coal is either pulled from the southern end of the pyre and maintained as a fire for three days and nights or a new fire is kindled with which to re-cremate the bones on the third day after the cremation. A pyre is constructed in exactly the same way as that used to cremate the body (Ved.2a). The performer grinds the bones to powder with the stones and butter is poured over them. The mixture is melted in the butter vessel and poured into the fire of the pyre with

[3] The seven śrauta vegetarian sacrifices: 1. the setting up of the sacred fires, 2. agnihotra, 3. the new-moon and full-moon sacrifices, 4. āgrayaṇa, 5. caturmāsyas, 6. dakṣāyaṇa, 7. the havis sacrifices relating to kundapāyinām ayanam (some authorities mention sautrāmanī instead of the last)

the words,"From this you are born, this is from you born. To Agni Vaiśvānara, the svarga realm, svāhā."

If the deceased has performed the agnicayana the bones are interred in a jar buried in the ground, as in the case of an anāhitāgni, but are later exhumed and deposited in a specially constructed clod or brick structure in the ceremony called loṣṭaciti (Ved.6a).
(Caland A.T.B. p.101-112)

The mantras accompanying the sprinkling of the bones, as Caland points out[4], clearly indicate that this ceremony is intended to cool and extinguish the fires used in the cremation. Fire as Apāṃ Napāt is the child who sprang from the womb of the waters and the waters are his abode and retreat[5]. In the ritual intended to extinguish the flame of the pyre, Agni is returned to a state of potentiality in the watery womb from which he sprang. Although the Śaunakin ritual does not explain what happens after the plants mentioned in the mantra have been cut, it seems likely, as Caland suggests[6], that the ritual and the words correspond and that the plants are thrown onto the pyre and into the rest of the fires. The marsh plants śaṇḍadūrvā, kiyambu and vyalkaśā are 'sown anew' on the area in which the fire has been kindled and "made as a bull"; Agni has been aroused for the

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[4] A.T.B. p.102

[5] R.V. 10:91:6; A.V. 1:33:1

[6] A.T.B. p.101-2

purpose of cremation but is returned to quiescence in the womb of the waters by the symbolic restoration of the watery domain over the cremation area.

In some of the sources the bones of the deceased may be collected by the chief mourner or the deceased's wife, both natural candidates for the task since they are under the heaviest pollution of all the mourners by reason of their close connection with the deceased. Other sources, however, state that the sañcayana is to be performed by elderly men or women. Perhaps the bone gatherers should be elderly because those who collect the bones have re-entered the domain of death and evil spirits. The elderly, who are nearer death anyway, have less to lose, should they be claimed by Yama through their association with the deceased, than younger mourners, who may be cut off before the completion of their proper lifespan as a result of their participation in the cremation ground rites. As in the case of the funeral procession (Ved.1e) and the cremation (Ved.8a), the Vedic material prescribes the attendance and participation of women at rituals concerned with the disposal of the deceased's remains, whereas in the ethnography the participation of women in such ceremonies appears to be confined to low-castes (Eth.1e).

As a general rule even numbers are associated with auspicious ceremonies and odd numbers with inauspicious ceremonies[7] and thus the inauspicious nature of the sañcayana ceremony is indicated by the use of an odd number of jugs to

[7] Gonda R.V. p.29-30

sprinkle the pyre and an odd number of women to collect the bones. The inauspicious and impure nature of the sañcayana ceremony is further indicated, as in the ethnography (Eth.3c), by the use of the left hand and foot in collecting the bones. It is possible that keeping the left foot on a stone while picking up the bones is a protective measure. The stone used in the rituals of re-entry into the house after the cremation appears to be a symbol of stability and continued life (Ved.3a). The bone collectors further protect themselves by tying an aubergine to their left hands with blue and red threads. The aubergine plant has the ability to drive away ghosts and remove evil influences (Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra 1:20)[8], protecting the mourners from the denizens of the cremation ground. Blue and red threads tied round a peg of wood are a frequently used device in Vedic ritual for barring the way and averting evil beings[9]. Wound round the wrists of the bone collectors, they act as further protection from death, ghosts and evil spirits. These measures may be intended to protect not only the performers of the ritual from the denizens of the cremation ground but also the deceased as represented by the bones. The mantra in which the mourners urge the spirit of the deceased to leave suggests, however, that the dead person is also one of the ghosts from whom the mourners seek to protect themselves although the ceremony is performed for his benefit.

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[8] Caland A.T.B. fn. 376 p.107

[9] Gonda R.V. p.326

As in the ethnography and G.P (Eth.3c, G.P.3c), the rite of bone collection is an inauspicious, impure rite which nevertheless demands ritual purity from the performer or performers and the woman must wipe her hand on an apāmārga (Achyranthes Aspera) plant before picking up the bones. The apāmārga plant, which is used in ritual to neutralize impurity and drive away evil[10], here protects the performer from the evil spirits of the cremation ground but also purifies her before she picks up the bones.

Monier-Williams[11] suggests that in early times (presumably in pre-Indo-Arian culture) bodies were simply buried, as in the tribes and low castes of the ethnography (Eth.2a), and that the Vedic hymn 10:18 reflects this cult of burial, in which the body was interred and a mound or memorial erected over it. Such an assertion is difficult to prove by means of Rg Vedic hymns alone, however, since R.V. 10:16 is clearly a cremation hymn. It is possible that R.V. 10:18 represents evidence of the earlier cult of burial persisting alongside the practice of cremation but there is no evidence to support this in the Vedic sūtras, where mantras from R.V. 10:18 are used in the second phase of a two- or three-stage disposal of the remains, in which the corpse is cremated and the bones then interred in a separate ceremony or ceremonies.

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[10] Gonda R.V. p.17

[11] p.279

It is interesting that although in theory the cremation dispatches the deceased's spirit on its journey to the highest heaven (Ved.2a), the mantras accompanying the interment suggest that the deceased still resides in the bones and the earth is urged to leave him space, that he may not be confined to the place of interment and fail to reach the kingdom of the Ancestors.

With the development of the theory of sacrifice, the cremation became identified with the agnicayana and the self-sacrifice of Prajāpati (Ved.2a). In some schools the disposal of the bones was apparently influenced by this identification, so that the interment of the remains along the lines of R.V.10:18 became the practice only for anāhitāgnis, whereas those who had performed śrauta sacrifices had their bones disposed of in the context of the type of sacrifice they were qualified to perform. In the haviryajñiyanivāpaḥ and the loṣṭaciti the link between the deceased and the sacrificial world and hence the death-defeating self-sacrifice of Prajāpati is reinforced by the interment of his bones in an area prepared for the havir yajña sacrifice and the agnicayana respectively, while in the case of the soma sacrificer the connection is reinforced by the repetition of the self-sacrifice on the pyre by the re-cremation of the bones. These additional methods of bone disposal do not seem to have found a wide acceptance in the time of the sūtras, and with the decline of Vedic ritual seem to have died out, for they feature neither in G.P. nor the ethnography. Although the disposal of the urn in

a stream or tīrtha is given as an option in Secondary Baudhāyana, this does not seem to have been common practice in Vedic ritual, but by the time of G.P. it has become the norm (G.P.3c). As in the ethnography (Eth.3c) the burial of the urn of bones may represent a temporary resting place, after which the bones are disposed of at a tīrtha, in the sea or are interred in a sepulchral mound.

3d. Offerings Associated With The Bone Collection Or The Grave.

In some sources an odd number of brahmins are fed before the collection of the bones. At the return to the cremation ground, before the sprinkling of the bones and the bone collection, the chief mourner takes a coal from the pyre and going in a southern direction lays it down on a spot which has been consecrated with the usual ceremony. With his sacred thread in the auspicious direction he makes three butter offerings to it with the sruva spoon reciting the following mantras:"Release him Agni, again to the Ancestors, him who with svadhā has been offered to you. He should go together with the rest (of the corpse) clothed in life itself, united with his own body, Agni"; "May the Ancestors and svadhā find you, to give you the reward in highest heaven, which you always wanted on earth. Go thither, may Savitṛ of the gods bring you", and "If a black bird, an ant, snake or even a beast of prey feeds on you, the much devouring Agni should atone for it, and Soma which inhabits the holy seers". The Rāṇayanīyas end the sacrifice by making a six-fold offering to Soma pitṛmant,

Agni pitṛmant, Agni the flesh devourer, Agni Kavyavāhana, Yama, Yama and Yamī jointly, and Vaivasvant.

In some sources the gathering of the bones is followed by the offering of piṇḍas and sesame water to three stones laid in a row, in the north "to Yama friend of the dead", in the middle "to the deceased N.N." and in the south "to Rudra, the one who dwells in the cremation ground". Once collected, the bones are decorated with flowers etc., except according to the more recent sources in which the figure made from ashes is decorated instead. In Gautama the urn containing the bones is filled with curds, fat, honey and water. A gold piece is then put in, followed by the decorative objects, the performer meditating each time on the river Ganges, Godāvarī, Yamunā, Kāverī and Bhīmaṛathī respectively. Then, according to the same text, "So long as only one bone remains in existence he continues to revel in highest heaven". On their return home from the interment ceremony the relatives offer the śrāddha known in the younger generation sources as pātheya śrāddha (viaticum śrāddha).

(Caland A.T.B. p.100-101, 106-109)

In G.P. (G.P.3d) the bone collection commences with an offering to the denizens of the cremation ground, while in the Vedic material the Rāṇayanīyas offer a similar sacrifice to Yama, lord of the funeral ground, in conjunction with various forms of Agni. In an offering not seen in G.P. (G.P.3d) or the ethnography (Eth.3d), the performer requests that Agni release to the

Ancestors the corpse which has been offered into the fire. As in the ethnography (Eth.2a) there is concern that the corpse should have been entirely consumed, but whereas in the ethnography the concern seems to be due to the fear that if the corpse is not fully consumed the ghost will return to haunt the relatives, here the concern appears to be that the deceased should reach the world of the Ancestors with his body intact. The transportation of the entire corpse as an oblation is Agni's responsibility; should any of it remain to be devoured by crows or beasts of prey, Agni will have to atone for it.

The type of offerings to the deceased and the channels through which they are made correspond with those seen in the ethnography (Eth.3d) and G.P. (G.P.3d), where piṇḍas and decorative substances are offered to the deceased as represented by bones, ashes and stones. The Vedic material also includes offerings to brahmins made before the bone collection, a feature not seen in G.P. or the ethnography but has no reference to the feeding of crows on behalf of the deceased at the bone collection ceremony, a common feature in ethnographic accounts. The name given to the śrāddha which follows the bone collection ceremony suggests that the younger generation sources interpret it as providing viaticum for the deceased's journey.

As in G.P. (G.P.3d), the offerings described at the bone collection are first stage ceremonies only, and there is no indication that the decoration and foodstuffs which have been offered to the ashes and bones are then offered to something or

someone else, as they are in the ethnographic accounts of many Hindu communities (Eth.3d). As crows and outcastes are the most frequent recipients of the second stage offerings, it seems possible that the two stage offering structure seen in the ethnography developed as a result of these further representations of the deceased being added to the Vedic and G.P. bone collection ceremony.

3e. Planting Seeds.

The Vedic material contains no evidence of the practice of planting seeds at the time of the bone collection ceremony.

Stage 4. Offerings To The Ghost.

4a. Creating A Temporary Body For The Ghost.

When the relatives return to the house after the cremation they usually perform the nagnaprachādana (the covering of nakedness) in which a brahmin is offered a garment, gold, a brass dish, a water jug etc., on behalf of the deceased with the words,"For N.N. of the family N.N., who now goes from the world of men to the world of ghosts (pretas). To liberate (him) from the condition of being a ghost, I will give today the nagnaprachādana for clothing along the way". A hole is dug in the earth at the side of the entrance to the house and fragrances and flowers are strewn into it. A stone is placed in the hole and remains there until after the tenth day piṇḍa has been offered. (Caland A.T.B. p.79-80, 82-3)

The offering of a garment and other items to a brahmin can also be seen in the ethnography (Eth.4a.) and as in the ethnographic accounts is intended to provide the spirit of the deceased, naked and without form after the cremation, with covering for his journey to the next world.

The fact that the stone which is set up immediately after the cremation and discarded at the end of primary pollution furnishes an abode for the deceased until the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam, is not made explicit in the Vedic material but is clear from the ethnography (Eth.4a): there the deceased is requested to take up residence in the stone known as the jivkhada ('lifestone'), which

provides the focus for pinda offerings and libations made during the first ten days.

4b. Offerings To The Disembodied Spirit.

A bowl filled with milk and water is fixed in a sling over the hole in which the stone is laid (Ved.4a) with the words,"Dead one bathe and drink here". This is performed only on the first day and is not repeated, but the basin is not discarded until after the tenth day pinda. Daily libations (udakriyā) are offered at the place where the relatives bathed on their return from the cremation ground. In Taittirīya and Gautama each day more libations should be made than on the previous day: on the first day three offerings, on the second day four, on the third day five, and so on until on the tenth day twelve are offered. In other ritual schools the libations are prescribed on the first, fourth, seventh and tenth day or only on the uneven days. The chief mourner also offers a jug of milk and water for the deceased each day during the period of primary pollution.
(Caland A.T.B. 81-4)

The increase in the number of libations offered each day is possibly intended to build up the dead person, reduced to a naked spirit after the cremation; the number seems to increase as the spirit progresses from naked ghost to the state of Ancestor, although this is not made explicit in the texts. It is interesting that in the Taittirīya schools and Gautama there are three libations on the first day, so that the final offering on

the tenth day consists of twelve libations, thus corresponding with the twelve months for which the deceased travels after death according to the eschatological theory in which he makes his way through the passage of the year to reach either the moon or the sun[1].

The offerings of milk and/or water in a jug or a basin to the deceased resemble the offerings to the airborne spirit seen in the ethnography (Eth.4b) and G.P. (G.P.4b). The mantra accompanying the bowl offering suggests that the Vedic milk and water offerings are also made to the aerial form of the deceased. The milk and water in the basin, however, are slung over the stone representing the deceased (Ved.4a) and therefore can also be seen as an offering to the stone as the dead person. As in the ethnography, the picture of the deceased appears to be fluid; the dead person inhabits a stone, is an aerial spirit and is also present in brahmins (Ved.4a,4c), and an offering may cover more than one of these categories.

4c. Offerings To Objects People And Animals.

Brahmins are fed and given gifts of uncooked food on behalf of the deceased in nava śrāddhas (new śrāddhas) held throughout the period of primary pollution. In Baudhāyana five nava śrāddhas are performed altogether, on the first, third, fifth, seventh and ninth days respectively, with each successive śrāddha using one more brahmin recipient than the previous śrāddha.
(Caland A.T.B. p.82-4; T.V. p.22-4)

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[1] Bṛ.Up. 6:2:4-16; Chān.Up. 5:10:1-10

In addition to the gift of a garment and other items made to a brahmin on behalf of the deceased (Eth.4a, Ved.4a), the dead man is also represented by brahmins in the _nava śrāddhas_. As in the ethnography (Eth.4c), the _nava śrāddhas_ consist of feasting and giving raw food to brahmins on behalf of the deceased. The fact that the number of brahmins fed is increased in each successive _śrāddha_ suggests that the _nava śrāddhas_ are a complement to the practice of offering increasing numbers of libations (Ved.4b) and are intended to build the deceased up as well as feed him, although this is never explicitly stated in the Vedic material. As the dead person progresses from the naked ghost left after the cremation he is represented by an increasing number of brahmins and requires an increasing amount of food. It is interesting that although _Brāhmaṇa_ theory sees the dead man as a sacrifice and his spirit as an oblation taken by Agni through the night or day and the passage of the months to either the world of the Ancestors or that of Brahmā (Ved.2a), Vedic rites nevertheless includes offerings which appear to be made to the deceased as a ghost still inhabiting the world of men, which must be fed, clothed and built up before it leaves its relatives and former home.

As mentioned above (Ved.4b), the basin of milk and water which is slung over the stone set up by the house may be seen as an offering to the deceased as represented by the stone. Unlike the ethnography and G.P. (Eth.4c,G.P.4c), where crows, cows and

dogs are given offerings during the period of primary pollution, the Vedic material contains no evidence of gifts to animals on behalf of the deceased.

4d. Piṇḍa Offerings.

Throughout the period of primary pollution a daily piṇḍa is offered to the deceased. The performer should pour out water with the words,"I wash you N.N. deceased". After the piṇḍa has been given the rite closes with the offering of fragrance, ointment, lamp etc., as in a normal śrāddha.
(Caland A.T.B. p.82)

As in the ethnography and G.P., a piṇḍa is offered daily during the period of primary pollution (Eth.4d,G.P.4d). According to Caland[2] there is no evidence in the Vedic material that these piṇḍas were intended to provide a new body for the deceased and the theory that they form the material for the deceased's new body is a later development[3]. The increasing number of brahmins and libations used throughout the period of primary pollution (Ved.4b,4c), however, suggests that the concept of building up the deceased after the cremation was implicit in the ritual.

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[2] A.T.B. p.82

[3] T.V. p.23

4e. The Ekoddiṣṭa And Ṣoḍaśaka Śrāddhas.

In the majority of texts, ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas are to be performed every month for one year, starting on the eleventh day. Śāṅkhāyana[4] also permits the ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas to cease after three and a half months or when something propitious happens, and in Pāraskara[5] the deceased may be admitted into the company of the Ancestors on the eleventh day without the performance of any monthly ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas.

The form of the ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha differs from that of a śrāddha performed for the Ancestors in that only one pot of argha water and one piṇḍa are offered, the dead person is not invited to come, no mantras are used, no food for the gods is put into the fire, the Viśve Devas take no part in the ceremony and the dead person is not dismissed but merely bidden to be at peace. The performer invites a brahmin, who has had his beard, hair and nails closely trimmed, to sit down facing north. The performer places a piṇḍa on darbha grass and turning towards the left sprinkles sesame water and adorns the piṇḍa with ointment etc.. The brahmin eats the piṇḍa after touching it with the root of his thumb, and when he has consumed it says, "Relished". The performer says, "Let there be svadhā", and the brahmin repeats this loudly. The performer places the sacred thread in the auspicious direction, gives a dakṣiṇā (a gift to the brahmin for his services) and goes home, where he performs a circumambulation

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[4] Gṛhya-sūtra 4:3:2f.

[5] Gṛhya-sūtra 3:10:48-50

to the right (pradakṣiṇā), has a puṇyāha (ceremony for an auspicious day) performed and eats the remains of the śrāddha food with his relatives.
(Gonda R.V. p.442)

In the Vedic sources there is no evidence for the practice of either feeding a feeding a brahmin to assuage the hunger of the deceased in his new body or for a ṣoḍaśaka type of ceremony. The former type of ceremony (Eth.4e, G.P.4e) is closely linked with the idea that until the deceased has been given a new body constructed from piṇḍas he is unable to eat and therefore is especially hungry after the completion of his body on the tenth day. The lack of such a ceremony in the Vedic sources, which do not interpret the piṇḍas given during the first ten days in such a way, is therefore understandable.

In the majority of texts it appears that the transference of the deceased to the status of Ancestor occurs at the end of the year and thus there is no difference between the ritual and literal time-scale of events, unlike in the ethnography and G.P. (Eth.4e,5c,G.P.4e,5c), so there is no necessity for the deceased to receive a series of anticipatory offerings at the end of primary pollution in order that the transference to Ancestor can occur on the twelfth day.

The sixteen 'monthly' offerings made to the deceased in the ethnography and G.P. (Eth.4e, G.P.4e) represent a later development and in Vedic ritual the number of śrāddhas

corresponds precisely with the number of months in the year. No explanation is given in the Vedic texts for the necessity of twelve monthly <u>ekoddiṣṭa</u> offerings before the deceased is transferred to the status of Ancestor. It seems possible, however, that the journey after death, through the months of the year, which receives its first clear exposition in the Upaniṣadic literature[6], underlies the practice of offering twelve monthly <u>ekoddiṣṭa</u> <u>śrāddhas</u> with the transfer to the status of Ancestor at the end of the year. Prajāpati, who created the cosmos through his self-sacrifice, is Lord of Death and hence also Lord of the Year, since"The Year, doubtless, is the same as Death, for he it is who, by means of day and night, destroys the life of mortal beings, and then they die"[7]. The deceased, who has become identified with Prajāpati through his life of sacrifice culminating in his self-sacrifice on the pyre, is also Lord of the Year and passes through the year to the immortal wish-granting world, which according to Śat.Br.[8] exists beyond it. Following the pattern of the <u>pārvaṇa</u> <u>śrāddha</u>, which represents the model from which all other Vedic <u>śrāddhas</u> are derived, the <u>ekoddiṣṭa</u> <u>śrāddhas</u> are performed once each month during the year after death. It is not clear from the Vedic <u>sūtras</u> whether <u>pārvaṇa</u> <u>śrāddhas</u> continue during the year after death or whether

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[6] Bṛ.Up 6:2:15-16; Chān.Up. 5:10:1-3; Kauś.Up. 1:2; Praś.Up. 1:9

[7] Śat.Br. 10:4:3:1

[8] 10:2:6:4

they are suspended until after the deceased is admitted to the company of the Ancestors in the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam.

Although the majority of Vedic sources specify that transfer to the status of Ancestor should take place at the end of a year, the evidence of Pāraskara and Śāṅkhāyana suggests that Vedic ritual did allow for the option of including the dead person among the Ancestors at an earlier date. It is not at all clear in these cases, however, whether an earlier date for the transfer to Ancestor affects the monthly offerings, as it does in later literature, where the monthly śrāddhas become anticipatory ṣoḍaśaka śrāddhas and/or take the form of anniversary śrāddhas performed in the year following the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam (Eth.4e,5c,G.P.4e,5c)[9].

As seen in the offerings to people and objects (Ved.4c) although the deceased has departed as an oblation making his way through the passage of the year, at the same time he appears to be present among the living and unlike an Ancestor does not need summoning to the śrāddha. Whereas in the ethnography and G.P (Eth.4e,4f, G.P.4f) the early performance of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam means that brahmins only have to represent the polluting ghost form of the deceased at the feeding rite after the construction of the new body and at the gift of the necessities of life, in the Vedic material a brahmin has to represent the polluting ghost at a series of ceremonies stretching over twelve months. In the Vedic ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha the deceased is represented both by the

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[9] Caland T.V. p.27f

<u>piṇḍa</u> which is adorned and honoured as the dead man and by the brahmin who eats the <u>piṇḍa</u>. The family can also be seen as eating on behalf of the deceased when they consume the remains of the <u>śrāddha</u>. The <u>ekoddiṣṭa</u> <u>śrāddha</u> has both auspicious and inauspicious features; no offering is made to the gods, the Viśve Devas play no part in the ceremony and the <u>śrāddha</u> is performed without mantras with the sacred thread in the inauspicious direction but the performer changes his sacred thread to the auspicious direction at the end of the ceremony and on his return home circumambulates in the auspicious direction and has a <u>puṇyāha</u> performed.

4f.The Gift Of The Necessities Of Life.

The Vedic material makes no reference to the practice of offering the gift of the necessities of life to a brahmin on behalf of the deceased to aid him on his journey after death. The ritual books do, however, mention a <u>dakṣiṇā</u> to be given to the priests for their services performed during the period of primary pollution. In Kātyāyana the <u>dakṣiṇā</u> is given in the form of a bed with pillows, a draught ox and barley, all items being old, because only old objects are holy to the Ancestors. In Āśvalāyana and Śāṅkhāyana the <u>dakṣiṇā</u> consists of a draught ox, a brass pot and an unused garment, while in Mānava it consists of ten milk cows, ten draught oxen, ten garments and ten brass vessels. In Kauśika the <u>dakṣiṇā</u> consists of a gift of at least ten cows. (Caland A.T.B. p.127-8)

The items given to the brahmin as daksiṇā in the Vedic sūtras correspond closely with those given to the brahmin on behalf of the deceased in G.P. and the ethnography (Eth.4f, G.P.4f). The statement in Kātyāyana that the gifts offered must be old, for only old things are holy to the Ancestors suggests that the brahmin's daksiṇā may also be intended to benefit the deceased and the Ancestors, although this is not made explicit as it is in G.P. and the ethnography, neither is there any indication that these objects were formerly the property of the deceased, a feature of the gift of the necessities of life seen both in G.P and the ethnography (Eth.4f, G.P.4f). It seems possible that the gift of the necessities of life represents a development from the Vedic daksiṇā in which the implicit idea that the gifts provide for the deceased in his existence after death becomes the primary purpose of the ritual.

4g. The Release Of The Bull.

The Vedic sūtras contain no reference to the release of the bull on behalf of the deceased, though they do refer to a bull release ceremony for the purpose of maintaining the fertility of the herds and the wealth and prosperity of the community, as discussed in G.P.4g.

4h.The End Of Primary Pollution.

Some schools mark the end of primary pollution, which mostly occurs on the tenth day, with the performance of śānti ceremonies but in other schools the śānti rites take place at the first new

moon after the sañcayana rather than at the end of primary pollution.

Several schools contain fire disposal and fire kindling ceremonies as part of the śānti rites; the exact procedures vary according to the school. In the Kauśika-sūtra[10] the household keeps an all night vigil by the hearth in which burns the fire which belonged to the deceased. A new fire is established on freshly consecrated ground and the performer lays a piece of wood on the new fire with his right hand saying,"O beautiful gārhapatya, burn away the misfortune and create good fortune for me each day". He places a reed in the old fire with the words,"I have extinguished the flesh-devouring fire". The old fire is taken out of the house through an entrance other than the door and extinguished. The ashes are disposed of in a southern or south-western direction with the words,"I send the flesh-devouring fire away. Let him go to Yama's kingdom, carrying away all impurities[11]." Black wool and lead are laid on the ashes with a mantra requesting that they take away the impurity. In Kātyāyana[12] the performer makes an oblation into the deceased's aupāsana fire before throwing out of the house (though not through the door) the portion of the aupāsana fire on which the offering has been made with the R.V. 10:16:9 mantra. In

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[10] 69:9-72:20

[11] R.V.10:16:9

[12] 21:4:25-30

Āśvalāyana[13], on the other hand, the family take the fire[14] and throw it away to the south with the R.V. mantra, circumambulate the ashes three times in the inauspicious direction and return home. At the time of agnihotra the performer kindles a new fire with,"May this other Jātavedas come here and carry the oblation to the gods, since he knows the way in advance"[15].

Relatives shave their hair and their beards, take a purificatory bath, put on a new garment, dispose of the stone and bowl of water kept during the period of impurity (Ved.4b) and fill in the hole in which the stone was kept. Then, with the sacred thread in the inauspicious direction, the relatives perform the śāntikarman proper. In Āśvalāyana it is performed at the house using the new fire kindled at the time of the agnihotra but in other schools a fire (not a sacred fire) is set up somewhere between the village and the cremation ground. In several schools a red bullock skin is laid out to the west of the fire with its neck to the east and the hair uppermost. The members of the household step onto it, the youngest first, while the adhvaryu recites,"Climb onto old age, choosing a long life-span and follow in regular succession as many as you are. May Tvaṣṭṛ, who presides over good births, be persuaded to give you a

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[13] Gṛhya-sūtras 4:6:1-5

[14] According to Nārāyaṇa this is common kitchen fire not the sacred domestic fire, but as Oldenberg (S.B.E. XXIX pt.1 p.246-7) points out the structure of the ceremony, including the re-kindling of fire at the agnihotra suggests that this is a rite in which the sacred fire is renewed.

[15] R.V. 10:16:9

long span to live"[16], and,"As days follow nights in regular succession, as seasons come after seasons in proper order, in the same way order their life-spans, O Arranger, so that the young do not abandon the old"[17]. The relatives then step off the skin with their faces to the east, the oldest going first, with the youngest, who brings up the rear, brushing the prints away with a branch whilst the following mantra is recited,"When you have gone, wiping away the footprint of death, stretching your own lengthening span of life, become pure and clean and worthy of sacrifice, swollen with offspring and wealth"[18].

The laying down of the stone is dealt with in all accounts. A stone is laid down by the adhvaryu with the mantra,"I set up this wall for the living, so that no one else among them will reach this point. Let them live a hundred autumns and bury death in this hill"[19].

The unwidowed women anoint their eyes with liquid butter which has been mixed with eye salve while the following Vedic mantra is recited:"These women who are not widows, who have good husbands, let them take their places using butter to anoint their eyes. Without tears, without sickness, well dressed let them first climb into the marriage bed"[20]. The impurity restrictions

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[16] R.V. 10:18:6

[17] R.V.10:18:5

[18] R.V.10:18:2

[19] R.V.10:18:4

[20] R.V.10:18:7

are lifted, the relatives no longer have to sleep on the floor and the first cooked food is prepared for the first time since the death occurred.
(Caland A.T.B. p.114-127)

As in G.P. and the ethnography (G.P.4h, Eth.4h), the end of primary pollution is marked by the relatives shaving, putting on new clothes, taking a purificatory bath and returning to sleeping on their beds instead of on the floor. G.P. and the ethnography, however, do not include śānti ceremonies in the form seen in the Vedic material. The Kāṭhiāwār brahmins[21] do dig up the domestic hearth on the tenth day and make a new one, but the explanation given is that it has become impure through cooking the funeral offerings, not as above, that the fire has become the dangerous Kravyāda form of Agni through being used at the cremation, although the two ideas are not miles apart, since the Kravyāda fire is associated with death impurity and misfortune. The Chetris (caste Hindus) and brahmins of Nepal[22] perform śuddha śānti on the thirteenth day after death but it consists of a fire worship ceremony in an enclosure set up in the courtyard rather than the Vedic procedures of stepping on an ox skin and placing a stone barrier between the living and the dead. It is possible that the lack of Vedic śānti ceremonies in G.P. and the ethnography is due to the fact that the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam on the

[21] Stevenson p.154

[22] Bennett p.107

twelfth day takes over the function of the *śānti* ceremony by signalling the retreat of death and pollution through the transfer of the deceased from dangerous polluting ghost to an Ancestor.

Śānti ceremonies (the term comes from the root *śam*, to stop, to pacify) are not specific to funerals: they are employed to avert the evil consequences of a wide range of situations, including potentially wrathful deities, falling stars, cows yielding blood red milk and birth under the wrong star configurations. In the case of the funeral ceremony the *śānti* rites are intended to extinguish the funeral fire and avert the evil consequences of the death. Although at the Vedic cremation ceremony great importance is attached to the fact that the cremation fire is present in the Jātavedas as well as the Kravyāda form and the corpse is given a protective covering in order that it should be cooked by the Jātavedas rather than destroyed by Agni Kravyāda, the idea that the corpse is 'cooked' by the Jātavedas appears to exist only within the context of the cremation itself. Outside the cremation, the fire which is used for the ceremony appears to be viewed as having one form only, that of the flesh-devouring Kravyāda fire; therefore it can no longer be used and a completely new fire is kindled. The exception to this appears to be Kātyāyana, according to which part of the fire representing the Kravyāda fire is discarded and the other half representing the Jātavedas is retained. The mantra used in the kindling of the new fire in Kauśika asks that the

gārhapatya burn away the bad fortune and create good fortune each day, suggesting that another reason for the disposal of the deceased's sacred fire is that it has become highly inauspicious, since whilst maintaining it he suffered the ultimate misfortune of death.

The relatives step onto the bullock skin using the reverse order of precedence, also seen in the funeral procession (Ved.2e), thus demonstrating the inauspicious nature of the occasion and the disruption of normal order which death brings about. When the relatives step off the skin eldest first, the normal order of precedence is restored, signalling the return to normal life after its disruption through death. While they are on the skin the mantra recited asks that the mourners should live out their proper life-spans, so that older members of the community die before the younger.

As at the end of the cremation ceremony (Ved.2e), the performers seek to separate the domains of the living and the dead, in this case by wiping out their footprints behind them and by setting up a barrier between the two worlds. The division between the two domains had become blurred: death has entered into the realm of the living to claim a victim and the living have ventured into the domain of death in order to perform the funeral ceremonies; now the distinction between the two is re-established by installing the stone barrier.

The mourners return not only to live out their life-spans but also to create new life, and the mantra accompanying the

salving of the eyes urges the unwidowed women to put death behind them and climb into the marriage bed.

Although the Vedic material contains no reference to the ritual of the first ten days creating a new body for the deceased (Ved.4d), some change in the deceased's status appears to occur at the end of primary pollution because the stone representing the deceased (Ved.4a) is discarded and the _piṇḍas_ and libations are replaced with the full _ekoddiṣṭa_ ceremony using the brahmin (Ved.4e).

Stage 5. The End Of Mourning.

5a.The Caste Feast.

The Vedic sūtras make no reference to a caste feast of the sort seen in the ethnography and G.P. (Eth.5a, G.P.5a).

5b. Recalling The Spirit.

The low caste and tribal practice of recalling the spirit of the deceased to the house where he died (Eth.5b) is not mentioned in the Vedic texts.

5c. Piṇḍa Ceremonies.

In the majority of texts the deceased is transferred to the state of Ancestor by means of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam ceremony, which is generally said to be performed at the end of the year, although some texts also allow the transfer to take place earlier, either on the eleventh day, after three and a half months or when something propitious happens (Ved.4e). The Gṛhya-sūtras of Pāraskara and Āśvalāyana, however, make no reference to the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam.

The general form of the ceremony is as follows. The performer, wearing a sacred thread over the right shoulder, adds fuel to the sacred fires. He fills four water pots (arghya) with water: the first for the ghost, the second for the deceased's father, the third for his grandfather and the fourth for his great-grandfather. The water from the ghost pot is distributed into the other three pots, leaving a little for the brahmin representing the ghost to consume (Ved.5d). The performer prepares four piṇḍas and distributes the first ball between the

other three with,"The Ancestors who (as) equals concordantly (dwell) in Yama's realm, for them be loka, food, adoration and sacrificial worship established among the gods. The living, my people, who (as) equals, concordantly dwell among the living, their prosperity must in this world fall to my share for one hundred years"[1], and "United be the design, united be the assembly, may your minds and senses be as one. Peaceful design I commend to you, with united offering I offer to you"[2]. The performer then repeats the process with the vessels containing arghya water with the words,"N.N., together with the fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers, this is your sesame water, to you svadhā namas". A sacrifice is then offered into the fire and with the completion of the ritual, the preta of the deceased becomes an Ancestor (pitṛ) and displaces his great-grandfather in the śrāddha ritual.

Whereas in the ethnography and G.P. (Eth.5c, G.P.5c) a twelfth day sapiṇḍīkaraṇam is the norm, in the majority of Vedic sūtras the transfer occurs at the end of the year. The deceased, who has become identified with Prajāpati, Lord of the Year, through his life of sacrifice, passes through the year in order to reach the wish-granting world which lies beyond (Ved.4e). Here, unlike in G.P. (G.P.5c) there is no dislocation of real and ritual time for ceremonial purposes, so the rite of transfer

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[1] Vāj.Saṃ. 19:45f.

[2] R.V. 10:191:3f.

takes place at the end of the year instead of on the twelfth day after death. The option of performing the sapindīkaraṇam at an earlier point after death is given in some texts but it is not clear from the sūtras themselves how an earlier performance of the sapindīkaranam relates to the series of monthly ekoddiṣṭa offerings (Ved.4e). It is interesting that, in addition to the set dates at which the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam may be performed, it is also said that the transfer ceremony can take place when something propitious happens. Caland suggests, using the evidence of later texts[3] that this provision enabled the family of the dead person to offer him the ābhyudayika śrāddha (śrāddha for an auspicious ritual) in conjunction with the other Ancestors on a joyful occasion. In the ethnography and G.P., the dislocation in ritual of literal time (Eth.4e,G.P.4e,5c) means that the transfer to Ancestor occurs virtually at the same time as the end of primary pollution; therefore, auspicious ceremonies may be held relatively soon after the funeral, though in some communities certain restrictions on auspicious activities continue for a year[4]. In the Vedic material the deceased remains in the state of a preta for the whole year and it seems likely that an auspicious event could not take place until the inauspicious and polluting ghost was made into to an Ancestor, giving rise to the provision that the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam could be held early in the event of an auspicious occasion.

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[3] T.V. p.27

[4] e.g. Chetris and brahmins of Nepal (Bennett p.107)

In Pāraskara and Āśvalāyana there is no reference to the type of transfer ceremony seen in other sources. In Pāraskara, the deceased is transferred from the state of being a ghost simply by having his *piṇḍa* included in a *śrāddha* for the Ancestors where the *piṇḍa* of the great-grandfather is left out and there is no reference to the merging of *piṇḍas* or *arghya* water. Simple *piṇḍa* rites of this kind, where the deceased is included among the Ancestors without being united to them by means of a merging ritual, are found in many caste Hindu communities of the ethnography (Eth.5c). Caland[5] suggests that the more complicated transfer ceremony, as seen in the other Vedic sources, G.P. and brahmin communities in the ethnography, represents a later development of, the simple rite seen in Pāraskara, in which elements of the *ekoddiṣṭa* and *pārvaṇa śrāddhas* are combined to make a rite of transition. The Vedic material contains no evidence of the two-fold merging ceremony seen in Pūrv.K. (G.P.5c), in which the *piṇḍa* and the water of the deceased are merged only with the materials representing the father and grandfather while the *piṇḍa* and vessel of the great-grandfather drop out of the ceremony after the initial worship of the three Ancestors.

5d. Ceremonies Using A Representation Of The Deceased.

In some sources brahmins attend the ceremony of transfer. The performer invites them on the day before the event, and

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[5] T.V. p.24

according to Baudhāyana[6] he should ask two brahmins to represent the Viśve Devas Kāma and Kāla, one to represent the ghost and three to represent the paternal Ancestors; but if the performer is unable to invite this number of brahmins he must invite a minimum of three: one for the Viśve Devas, one for the ghost and one for the three paternal Ancestors. The brahmins are feasted and those representing the Viśve Deva brahmins are honoured with namaskāra (the folding of hands: a form of homage offered to gods, brahmins etc.) When the arghya water from the preta vessel is distributed into the three vessels for the Ancestors a little is kept behind and offered to the brahmin representing the ghost, while the brahmins representing the Ancestors are offered water from the three vessels for the Ancestors. When the piṇḍas have been united, the brahmins are given dakṣiṇā, after which the deceased is considered to be one of the Ancestors.
(Kane v.IV p.522, Gonda R.V. p.443)

The use of brahmins to represent the deceased, the Ancestors and the Viśve Devas in the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam corresponds with Pūrv.K. and the accounts of brahmin communities in the ethnography (G.P.5d, Eth.5d). As in Pūrv.K., it is assumed that a brahmin will represent the ghost; but unlike in the ethnography where the inauspicious and polluting ghost may be represented by a bundle of darbha grass rather than by a brahmin.

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[6] Pitṛmedha-sūtra 3:12:12

5e. Opening The Gates Of Heaven.

The Vedic material makes no reference to such a rite.

Stage 6. Memorial Ceremonies.

6a. Memorials.

In the case of those whose remains are permanently buried in a jar, the bone vessel itself provides a memorial for the deceased (Ved.3c). If, however, the deceased has undergone re-cremation, the ceremony prescribed in the Taittirīyas for one who has performed the Soma sacrifice (Ved.3c), no bones remain to provide a memorial for the deceased. Instead, the place where the re-cremation was carried out is strewn with black earth or covered with small stones.

Some schools describe the ceremony of the preparation of a burial place (śmaśāna) and the interment of the bones in a sepulchral mound (loṣṭaciti,'the piling up of clods'). According to the Taittirīya schools, these ceremonies should only be included in the funeral if the deceased has performed the Agnicayana, but the Mādhyandinas give dimensions for the funeral mounds of women, śūdras, vaiśyas, and kṣatriyas as well.

The various schools give a number of options for the time at which the erection of the funeral mound should be performed, ranging from an uneven day after death[1] to an odd number of years after death or even a time when the year of death is no longer remembered.

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[1] Some texts oppose the performance on uneven days during the first ten days, however, on the grounds that the feeding of brahmins which forms part of the loṣṭaciti is forbidden during the period of primary pollution.

According to Kātyāyana the bones are initially interred in an urn in the same way as for an anāhitāgni or a woman (Ved.3c), except that they are buried without mantras. The jar of bones is exhumed at the start of the śmaśāna and loṣṭaciti ceremonies. The building of the sepulchral mound commences with the dhuvanam (fanning ceremony). An apartment or shed is prepared between the cremation ground and the village and according to Kauśika it should have an entrance in the north for the living and at the south for the Ancestors. A fire (not sacred) is kindled in the hut and at this point the more recent Taittirīyas conduct the ceremony in which the dead man's wife engages in ritual dialogue with a śūdra or brahmabandhu (Ved.8a) after which the bones of the deceased are placed in the hut.

A feeding ceremony then follows. In Kauśika the performer pours three potfuls of water on the jar of bones saying, "This is your vessel, O Ancestors", and three brahmins who have bathed and applied sandal paste to their foreheads are given madhumantha (a honey drink). A cow is then slaughtered and the right half of the animal fed to brahmins while the left side is set aside for the Ancestors. Two dishes are cooked, one containing barley, the other flesh from the cow. The relatives eat the barley porridge while the deceased is offered a piṇḍa made from the cooked meat along with madhumantha and barley porridge. After the steam has gone out of the ball of meat offered to the deceased it is consumed by the attendants carrying the jar of bones. In the Taittirīyas a vessel with a hundred holes at the bottom is placed

on a peg above the bones and filled with curds and milk. According to Baudhayana as the contents trickle onto the bones the performer recites, "I offer Vaiśvānara the havis, the thousand-fold, hundred-fold stream, with this brimming (vessel) he should feed the father, grandfather and great-grandfather". The members of the dead person's family conclude the dhuvana ceremony by circumambulating the vessel of bones and striking it with a red ox skin and fanning it with the upper garment. This rite is accompanied by singing and dancing.

In some texts the śmaśāna is situated on the spot where the deceased was cremated, while in others, which envisage an interval of months or years between the death and the erection of the funeral mound, a suitable area is selected. According to Śat.Br.[2] a pleasant place should be selected on level ground facing south-east,"For in that region assuredly is the door to the world of the Ancestors: through the above he thus causes him to enter the world of the Ancestors".

The preparation of the śmaśāna as described in two of the most detailed accounts, Baudhāyana 1:14-16 and Śat.Br. 13:8:2-4, can be summarised as follows. The area is swept with a branch accompanied by a mantra for driving the evil spirits away, after which the branch is thrown away to the south. The area of the mound is marked out using four pegs around which a cord is twisted to the left. The area should be ploughed up with a team of oxen and the vessel of bones placed in one of the furrows.

[2] 13:8:5-9

According to Śat.Br. the four furrows following the outline of the śmaśāna establish the deceased in whatever food there is in the four quarters, while the furrows across the site establish the dead person in whatever food there is in the year. The performer sows the furrows with the seed of various herbs, praying that the deceased's family may die of old age.

The bones are taken out of the vessel and arranged on the śmaśāna according to the human anatomy. The adhvaryu then piles up the loṣṭaciti, using pebbles if the deceased has not performed the Agnicayana and bricks if the deceased has performed the fire sacrifice. According to Śat.Br. the bricks are only distinguishable from those used in the Agnicayana by the fact that they lack the lines marked on them, and in Baudhāyana it is said that the number should correspond with the number which the deceased has piled on the fire altar in his lifetime. The final size of the mound should reach as high as a person with up-stretched arms for a kṣatriya, to the mouth for a brahmin, to the hips for a woman and to the thighs for a vaiśya and to the knees for a śūdra (Kātyāyana also gives these dimensions for the mound). In Śat.Br. trenches are dug to the north of the mound and filled with water,"for sin not to pass beyond", and two furrows are dug on the south side of the mound and filled with milk and water,"two inexhaustible streams (that) flow to him in the other world." The relatives leave the area by the same methods as at the cremation (Ved.2e).

(Caland A.T.B. p.129-179, Śrautakośa v.1 pt.2 p.1035, 1096-1109, Kane v.4 p.246-254)

The instructions for the building of the funeral mound correspond closely with those for the construction of the fire altar. The śmaśāna and the fire altar are both four-cornered and prepared by ploughing with an oxen team. In both cases the number of oxen used is said to correspond with the number of seasons in the year[3] and in both cases the furrows represent the body of the sacrificer/Prajāpati[4]. In both ceremonies the furrows are sown with seed, which is said to put food into the body of the sacrificer/Prajāpati, and in both cases the four-cornered site is supposed to ensure that he receives food from the four quarters as well as from the year (as represented by the number of furrows)[5]. Both ceremonies involve the construction of a brick structure which represents the year, but whereas in the Agnicayana a gold figure is laid in the structure to represent Prajāpati, in the loṣṭaciti the bones of the sacrificer are used instead[6].

The close correspondence between the loṣṭaciti and the Agnicayana, taken with the Taittirīya view that the construction of the burial mound can only be performed if the dead man has

[3] Śat.Br. 7:2:2:6; 13:8:2:6

[4] Śat.Br. 7:2:2:17; 13:8:2:8

[5] Śat.Br. 7:2:4:14; 13:8:2:7-8

[6] Śat.Br. 7:4:1:15; 13:8:3:5

stacked the fire-altar in his lifetime, suggests that the <u>loṣṭaciti</u> represents a development of the bone disposal ceremony from the internment of the urn accompanied by mantras based on R.V. 10:18, as seen in the rites for women and <u>anāhitāgnis</u>, to a repetition of the building of the fire-altar in which the bones of the deceased replace the image of Prajāpati. The ceremonial burial of the bones for the person who has performed <u>havis</u> and the re-cremation ceremony of the Taittirīyas (Ved.3c) can also be seen as developments in bone disposal resulting from the rise of sacrificial theory: the importance of sacrifice was validated by an ascending range of bone disposal ceremonies open only to those who entered the sacrificial life, with the most prestigious ceremony being confined to those who completed the most advanced sacrifice, the Agnicayana.

The evidence of the Mādhyandinas suggests that the <u>loṣṭaciti</u>, with the substitution of pebbles for bricks and with differing heights of funeral mound, was open to those who had not performed the Agnicayana and also to non-brahmins. The statements about the size of mounds, however, are highly symbolic, for according to the Cosmogonic Hymn[7], when Primal Man created the world through his self-sacrifice, the brahmins came from his mouth, the <u>kṣatriyas</u> from his two arms, the <u>vaiśyas</u> from his thighs and the <u>śūdras</u> from his two feet. It is unlikely that the directions about the size of mound for <u>varṇas</u> other than the brahmin have anything more than a symbolic value connecting the

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[7] R.V. 10:90:12

funeral mound still further with the self-sacrifice of Prajāpati. It is possible that the pebble <u>loṣṭaciti</u> of the Mādhyandinas represents an intermediate bone disposal ceremony like the ceremonial burial and re-cremation rites in the Taittirīyas, distinguishing those who have entered the sacrificial life from <u>anāhitāgnis</u>, who only qualify for the <u>Kauśika-sūtra</u> urn burial. According to Caland the practice of the <u>loṣṭaciti</u>, which if confined to those who had performed the Agnicayana can never have been very common, declined with time. He argues on the basis of <u>Baudhāyana Pitṛmedha-sūtra</u> 2:3 that originally it was performed during the period of <u>aśauca</u> and before <u>śāntikarman</u> but that by the time of the more recent Taittirīyas was only rarely performed and was placed after the <u>śāntikarmaṇ</u> and the end of pollution[8]. With the decline of Vedic ritual it seems to have died out completely and is not referred to in either G.P. or the ethnography.

In the feeding rites connected with the bones in the <u>sañcayana</u> (Ved.3d) the food is intended for the deceased alone; but in the <u>dhuvana</u> it appears that the three Ancestors are fed through the medium of the deceased's remains. It is not entirely clear from the texts whether the dead person is counted as one of the Ancestors or whether the rites are intended to satisfy the deceased plus his father, grandfather and great-grandfather; and this ambiguity reflects the wide number of options for the performance of this rite, including times both before and after

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[8] A.T.B. p.116

the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam. The feeding of Ancestors through offerings to the bones is found neither in G.P. nor in the ethnography. In addition to the bones being given offerings for the Ancestors, the inhabitants of the world of the dead are fed through a number of other mediums: the three brahmins given the madhumantha are invited to represent the Ancestors; the deceased is given a piṇḍa of meat and other offerings as a disembodied spirit, and also appears to be represented by the bone carriers who consume these offerings when they have cooled. While some of the foodstuffs are shared between the representatives of the living and the dead, the distinction between the two worlds is nevertheless maintained. The Ancestors enter the hut through the south entrance while the brahmins enter it through the north and the left half of the slaughtered animal is set aside for the Ancestors while the right half is given to the brahmins. The distinction between the world of gods and men and that of the Ancestors is also maintained in the loṣṭaciti itself. Although the main features of the ceremony are held in common with the Agnicayana there are certain differences of detail. The cattle are unhitched in the north east in the Agnicayana[9] but in the south east for the loṣṭaciti ceremony[10], and the bricks in the Agnicayana are marked with lines[11] but those for the loṣṭaciti

[9] Śat.Br. 7:2:2:21

[10] Śat.Br. 13:8:2:9

[11] Śat.Br. 8:7:2:17

are unmarked[12]. Śat.Br. explains that by these distinctions the performer,"keeps the divine separate from what belongs to the Ancestors", and when the relatives leave the śmaśāna area they do so using the same rituals of separation seen in the exit from the cremation ground (Ved.2c).

According to sacrificial theory, the person who performs the Agnicayana, by identifying himself with Prajāpati, becomes Lord of the Year and goes to the immortal world beyond, thus escaping re-death (Ved.4d). The world beyond belongs to a complex of ideas which includes Prajāpati, fire, gold, the sun and immortality (Ved.2c). The antithesis to this group is the complex which includes Yama, Death, the moon, Ancestors and rebirth. Yama is lord of the dead (Ved.2c) and the Pitṛyāna (the way of the dead to the world of Ancestors and eventual rebirth), while the moon is the eye of the Ancestors lighting up this path[13]. In theory the performance of the Agnicayana should change the deceased's position after death; he has allied himself with Prajāpati and therefore dissociated himself from the complex of the world of the Ancestors and eventual rebirth. In the loṣṭaciti, however, although the association with Prajāpati is reinforced by the repetition of the ritual forms of the Agnicayana, the deceased is nevertheless treated as one of the Ancestors: Śat.Br. associates the site of the mound with entrance to the Ancestor world, the deceased is fed in the company of the Ancestors, and at the end

[12] Śat.Br. 13:8:3:6

[13] Mait.Saṃ. 4:2:1

of the ceremony the relatives take the same precautionary measures for leaving the area as they do when they seek to prevent the inhabitants of the world of death following them from the funeral ground after the cremation (Ved.2e).

Although the performer of the Agnicayana receives a more elaborate bone disposal ceremony than an ordinary āhitāgni or an anāhitāgni, it does not seem to have changed his position with regard to the Ancestors. There is no indication that śrāddha rites for one who has performed the Agnicayana were modified in any way and it seems that the person continued to be included in the śrāddha rites for Ancestors of the lunar world which led to rebirth and re-death. Sacrificial theory seems to have had a great influence on the form of corpse disposal, so that cremation became a re-creation of Prajāpati's self-sacrifice, but it seems to have had little impact on ideas about the dead person going to the lunar world of the Ancestors. Although in sacrificial theory the Yama/Death/moon/Ancestor complex was the snare from which a person sought to escape through sacrificial practice, it seems that after death he nevertheless became incorporated into the world of the Ancestors through the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam. Ideas about what happens after death in Ṛg Vedic material are not very clear but it is possible that the anomaly, in which the deceased comes to be included in the world which he seeks to escape, arises from the fact that in the culture prior to the period of Brahminical theory all dead people went to a lunar world after death and were sustained there by śrāddha offerings from relatives. Later the

world of the Ancestors came to be associated with rebirth and re-death, which men sought to escape through sacrifice, but the earlier śrāddha cult persisted.

6b. Ceremonies For Reborn Ancestors.

The Vedic sūtras contain no reference to any ceremony whereby a family ascertains the identity of the Ancestor who has been reborn into the family in the form of a new child.

6c. Anniversary Ceremonies For Individual Ancestors.

According to Caland[14] brief references to anniversary ceremonies for the deceased alone are to be found in Yajñavalkya[15], Manu[16], and various śrāddha-kalpas and dharma-sūtra works. These anniversary ceremonies took the form of ekoddiṣṭa śrāddhas, which differed from those performed before the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam in that they were preceded by a śrāddha to the Viśve Devas and that the dead person was no longer addressed as preta. It is possible that such rites were performed in earlier ritual, but the lack of reference in the Gṛhya-sūtras to an anniversary śrāddha suggests that originally once the deceased was admitted into the company of the Ancestors he ceased to be treated as an individual but was thereafter only honoured in śrāddha rites for three Ancestors.

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[14] T.V. p.31-2

[15] 1:255 which he translates," One must perform it (the ekoddiṣta) in each month and for a year afterwards and thereafter (i.e. on the death day) in each year.

[16] 3:247-8

6d. Memorials For All The Ancestors.

For those who have lit śrauta fires the father, grandfather and great-grandfather are remembered in the piṇḍapitṛyajña (sacrifice of piṇḍas for the Ancestors). In some texts the piṇḍapitṛyajña is treated as a subordinate part (aṅga) of the darśeṣṭi (new moon sacrifice), while in others it is said to be an independent rite. The piṇḍapitṛyajña should be performed each month on the amāvāsyā (new moon day), when the moon cannot be seen. According to Śat.Br.[17] the moon is king Soma, food of the gods and Ancestors, and during the night of the new moon it fails them, so the performer must provide both gods and Ancestors with offerings of food in the new moon sacrifice.

The piṇḍapitṛyajña is performed on the afternoon of the new moon day. The performer, wearing his thread in the inauspicious direction, prepares rice and cooks it over the dakṣiṇā fire. When the rice is properly cooked he pours clarified butter onto it and takes the pot from the fire. With the sacred thread in the auspicious direction he dips the corn-stirring stick into the cooked rice and offers three oblations on the dakṣiṇā fire to pitṛmant Soma, aṅgirasvant Yama and sviṣṭakṛt Agni. With the sacred thread in the inauspicious direction he digs up the ground to the south of the dakṣiṇā fire with a wooden sword. He spreads blades of darbha grass, which have been cut off at the roots, on the area with their tips pointing towards the south, and sprinkles them with water at three places with the mantra,"May

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[17] 2:4:2:7-8

the fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers wash themselves pure". He puts down three piṇḍas made from the cooked rice for the father, grandfather and great-grandfather respectively with the words, "Here may you regale yourselves, O Ancestors and may you partake according to your shares"; he then turns his back on them, turning back to face them only after the steam has ceased to come out of them. He sprinkles all the balls with water and applies unguents and clarified butter to them with the words,"You N.N. father etc., apply the unguents", and "You N.N. father etc. put the collyrium on your eye". He then places on each of the piṇḍas the hem of a garment, a woollen tuft or a hair from his own body (if he is over fifty years of age) with the words,"O Ancestors, this is the garment for you, may you not come in contact with any other (garment) than this." He then prays to the Ancestors with the mantra,"O well disposed Ancestor, may you depart by the ancient and awe-inspiring paths after bestowing on us health and welfare. May you send down to us prosperity including manly sons". In some texts the piṇḍas are put into the gārhapatya fire while in others the balls are thrown into water, onto a heap of ashes or given away to a brahmin. According to some sūtras, if the sacrificer's wife desires a son the performer should take hold of the middle ball with the words,"O Ancestors bestow on me a valiant (son)", and then should give his wife the piṇḍa to eat with the words,"O Ancestors, may you deposit an embryo that will be a young boy wearing a lotus wreath, so that he may be unhurt".

The equivalent of the piṇḍapitṛyajña for those who have not consecrated śrauta fires is the pārvaṇa śrāddha. Some texts mention its performance by āhitāgni as well, when it is referred to as an anvāhāryam or supplementary ritual, performed following on from the piṇḍapitṛyajña. The pārvaṇa śrāddha is performed each month on the amāvāsyā day and can be summarised as follows. On the day before the ceremony the performer invites brahmins to represent the Ancestors. He should invite at least three and always an odd number and they should be of irreproachable character and conduct. Some authorities require further brahmins to represent the Viśve Devas, who are seated facing east during the śrāddha ceremony and are supposed to ward off demons. On the day of the offering the brahmins sit down facing north. The performer, wearing his thread in the inauspicious direction, prepares food on the domestic fire, which has been conveyed to the south east of the śrāddha area. With the permission of the brahmins, the performer invokes the Ancestors, after having thrown sesame in every direction with the words,"The asuras appearing in the shape of Ancestors must go away". The performer offers arghya water to the brahmins with the part of his left hand between thumb and forefinger, or with his right hand seized by his left hand with,"Father etc., this is your arghya". He pours the remainder on the barhis (The sacred grass with which the sacrificial area is strewn) or if he wants a son he moistens his face with it.

The performer gazes at the brahmins with the words,"Ādityas, Rudras, Vasus". Then he offers perfumes, garlands, incense, light and clothes to the brahmins or one garment for the Ancestors in common. Then, with the permission of the brahmins, he sacrifices in the fire or into their hands some food from the sthālīpāka (a dish of barley or rice, boiled in milk and used for oblations) which he has smeared with ghee. The brahmins are made to eat with the words,"N.N. father etc., svadhā namas". While the brahmins eat various mantras are recited. At the conclusion of the meal the performer asks the brahmins if they enjoyed their food, makes them rinse their mouths or recites the mantras R.V. 1:90:6-8 and R.V. 1:82:2. He takes whatever food he has used together with the sthālīpāka in order to make piṇḍas which are offered in the same way as in the piṇḍapitṛyajña. Śāṅkh.Gr.[18] also mentions piṇḍas for the wives of the three Ancestors. The remains from making the piṇḍas are given to the brahmins and the performer circumambulates them in the auspicious direction before dismissing them.

The other major śrāddhas described in the Gṛhya-sūtra manuals are those accompanying the aṣṭakās. The aṣṭakā ceremonies derive their name from the fact that they should be performed on the eighth day of the dark fortnight in the months of winter, i.e. between the Agrahāyaṇa full moon and Phālguna full moon. Although a possible total of four could be celebrated, however,

[18] 4:1:11

most authorities describe only three, the last of which, held during the dark fortnight of Māgha (Jan.-Feb.), is referred to as the ekāṣṭakā. There is considerable divergence of opinion as to the purpose of the aṣṭakā ceremonies: according to Āśv.Gr.[19] some state that it is sacred to the Viśve Devas, some to Agni, some to the Sun, some to Prajāpati, some to the Night, some to the Nakṣatras, some to the seasons, some to the Ancestors and for yet others it is sacred to cattle.

In the descriptions of the three aṣṭakās the first rite consists of oblations offered to Aṣṭakā or Ekāṣṭakā, addressed as the one who shone forth first, the consort of the seasons, the leader of days, the producer of offspring and the leader to old age[20]. The second aṣṭakā consists of the sacrifice of a cow and the omentum is offered to the Ancestors along with an eight-fold oblation of cooked food. The third aṣṭakā consists of a sacrifice of cakes or vegetables offered as oblations to the Aṣṭakā. On the day after each of the aṣṭakās, or on the day after the second aṣṭakā only, the anvaṣṭakā is held, which follows the procedure of the piṇḍapitṛyajña and includes offerings of meat (in the aṣṭakā following the animal sacrifice, meat which has been left over from the previous day's ceremonies), boiled rice etc. to the three Ancestors and their wives.

The first two aṣṭakās could be omitted and performed in an abbreviated form as part of a three day ekāṣṭakā rite held on the

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[19] 2:4:12

[20] Pār.Gr. 3:3:5

seventh, eighth and ninth days of the dark fortnight of Māgha or they could be compressed still further into a one day ekāṣṭakā rite. Some of the descriptions of the three day ekāṣṭakā are extremely elaborate but the basic form is as follows. On the seventh day homas to Aṣṭakā are combined with the offering of rice, boiled rice with sesame, rice-milk or cakes to the Ancestors and the feeding of brahmins with a cake divided into eight parts. On the eighth day the cow is sacrificed to the Ancestors and the oblation of the omentum offered to them. Brahmins are fed with some of the meat and oblations are offered to the Ekāṣṭakā. On the ninth day the anvaṣṭakā is held and an odd number of brahmins are fed.

A further śrāddha rite is known as Māghyāvarṣa (a śrāddha in the rainy season when the moon is in the Māgha nakṣatra) or Mādhyāvarṣa (śrāddha in the middle of the rainy season). The texts themselves are not explicit about exactly when this was performed but according to Nārāyaṇa it should be performed on the seventh, eighth or ninth day of the dark half of Bhādrapada while according to others it was a rite like the aṣṭakās but performed on the thirteenth of the dark half of Bhādrapada, when the moon is generally in the Māgha nakṣatra.

Some sūtras also describe a monthly śrāddha known as the māsika śrāddha or māsi-śrāddha which is to be performed in the waning part of every month on an odd day. It is similar in pattern to the pārvaṇa śrāddha but also includes elements of the

aṣṭakā ceremony. A daily tarpaṇa (libation) to gods, ṛṣis and Ancestors is also prescribed in the sūtras.
(Śrautakośa v.1 p.211-212; Kane v.2 p.1085-1090, v.4 p.356-362; Gonda R.V. p.420,444-456)

The position occupied by the Ancestors in Vedic ritual is clearly seen in the piṇḍapitṛyajña. The Ancestors and the gods are both classes of divine beings, feasting together on king Soma (the moon). Both Ancestors and gods must be fed at the time of the new moon, when the soma supply fails; but the feeding ceremonies employed in the darśa sacrifice (for the gods) differ in several respects from those used for the piṇḍapitṛyajña ceremony. The sacrificial grass for Ancestors is cut off at the roots rather than at the tips as it is for the gods, and it is laid pointing to the south not to the north; the ghee is poured on while the pot is on the fire not into the fire as it is in an offering to the gods; a line is scratched out for the Ancestors while an altar area is scratched out for the gods and the performer wears his thread in the inauspicious direction for the Ancestors and the auspicious direction for the gods. While both gods and Ancestors are divine beings and both have the power to grant health, wealth and offspring, they are differentiated in ritual and the Ancestors are treated as inauspicious in comparison with the gods because of their connection with death. In the Upaniṣads, however, the Ancestors' position with regard to the gods appears to be rather different; they are not soma eaters

in the company of the gods but soma itself[21], eaten and excreted to earth in the form of rain to be reborn. The piṇḍapitṛyajña appears to represent old ideas about the Ancestors as divine soma eaters, as seen in the Ṛg Vedic hymns[22], but the Upaniṣads show how the association of re-incarnation with the Ancestors seems to have eroded their divine qualities. Unlike the gods, who were immortal, the Ancestors came to represent the rebirth and re-death which people sought to avoid through the practice of sacrificial ritual or the adoption of the ascetic's life. The idea that Ancestors became soma and were thus reborn did not affect the performance of the new moon rites, but it is possible that it affected attitudes towards the Ancestors, distancing them from the gods and strengthening their connection with ghosts, so that in the ethnography they are as much associated with causing barrenness as with relieving it (Eth.7h).

According to Caland references to a rite known as pitṛyajña predate those to the piṇḍapitṛyajña and that originally Ancestor offerings were made without piṇḍas to the three classes of pitṛs known as somavantas, barhiṣadāḥ and agniṣvāttāḥ[23]. He argues that the piṇḍapitṛyajña, in which piṇḍas are offered to the three ascending generations of male Ancestors, was a later development

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[21] Bṛ.Up. 6:16

[22] e.g. R.V. 10:15

[23] As referred to in R.V. 10:15:4,11 and Tait.Sam.2:6:12:2

which came into being about the time that the later Saṃhitās achieved their final form[24].

The principle difference between the piṇḍapitṛyajña and its equivalent for the anāhitāgni is that the pārvaṇa śrāddha uses brahmins to represent the Ancestors in addition to piṇḍas. Caland suggests that originally domestic worship adopted the piṇḍapitṛyajña of the śrauta ritual and added one of the brahmin feeding ceremonies characteristic of gṛhya ritual to produce an Ancestor rite for anāhitāgnis. Gradually the brahmins in the feeding ritual came to be identified with the Ancestors and the pārvaṇa śrāddha took the form seen in the gṛhya-sūtras, in which the Ancestors are summoned in the spirit to partake of piṇḍas, are given offerings as piṇḍas and are fed through brahmin representatives[25]. According to Caland the inclusion of brahmins to represent the Viśve Devas was a custom which originated with the Kātyāyanas and spread with its original mantras to other schools[26].

The decline of śrauta sacrifice meant that the pārvaṇa śrāddha, although derived from the piṇḍapitṛyajña, became the model (prakṛti) of which the aṣṭakās and other śrāddhas were regarded as variants (vikṛti). The practice of pārvaṇa śrāddha continues into G.P. (G.P.6d), although from the evidence of the ethnography it would appear to have declined since then (Eth.6d).

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[24] A.A. 152-3

[25] A.A. p.153-157

[26] A.A. p.160f.

G.P. and the ethnography also refer to the practice of offering daily tarpaṇa (libations) to the Ancestors in the company of the gods and ṛṣis (G.P.6d, Eth.6d). G.P. and the ethnography, however, contain no reference to the practice of aṣṭakā śrāddhas.

Although explanations as to the purpose of the aṣṭakā ceremonies are numerous, the mantras addressed to the Aṣṭakā or Ekāṣṭakā clearly associate them with the year and Śat.Br.[27] claims that the eighth day is sacred to Prajāpati and represents the joint of the year. Aṣṭakā ceremonies commence in the autumn, as the old year draws to a close, and culminate with the ekāṣṭakā during the spring and the start of the new year. Opinion as to the exact month in which the year commenced is not unanimous[28] but if, as Oldenberg suggests, Phālguna is reckoned as the first month of the year, the Ekāṣṭakā, "consort of the Year", precedes the new year by only a few days and the aṣṭakās would appear to represent a series of new year ceremonies culminating in the ekāṣṭakā immediately before the start of the new year.

The connection between the aṣṭakās and śrāddha rites could be that the autumn was considered to be the time sacred to the Ancestors, as opposed to the spring, summer and rains which were sacred to the gods[29], but their association could also be due to the fact that the Ancestors were particularly thought to have jurisdiction over the fertility and wealth of men, granting sons

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[27] 6:2:2:23-4

[28] Gonda R.V. 408-412

[29] Śat.Br. 11:1:3:1

and cattle, so that in the aṣṭakā ceremonies rites connected with ensuring the renewal of the year were combined with those for the Ancestors as guardians of human wealth and prosperity. Unlike in other Vedic śrāddha ceremonies, the Ancestors are given eight-fold offerings instead of the normal three-fold or six-fold offerings for the three male Ancestors alone or the three paternal relatives plus their wives. The eight-fold offerings are clearly associated with the aṣṭakā being a ceremony of the eighth day, however, and there is no indication in the sūtras that they are offered to anyone other than the three male Ancestors plus wives of the normal śrāddha ceremonies. It is interesting that while the inclusion of wives in the pārvaṇa śrāddha is uncommon it is the norm in śrāddhas associated with aṣṭakā ceremonies. It is possible that the practice of including wives is particularly associated with the aṣṭakā ceremony because the purpose of the rite is primarily to ensure renewed fertility, rather than to feed the Ancestors during the absence of other food as it is in the pārvaṇa śrāddha, and for this reason both male Ancestors and their wives were honoured.

Although the aṣṭakā rites died out, the tradition of holding a śrāddha at Bhādrapada survived and developed, so that in the ethnography the sarvapitṛ amāvāsyā ceremonies represent the major rites in which Ancestors are remembered, including not only the classical group of three ascending male Ancestors but all other dead relations as well (Eth.6d).

6e. Śrāddhas For Special Occasions And In Special Circumstances.

On auspicious occasions such as the birth of a son, name-giving or marriage the ābhyudayika śrāddha (śrāddha granting prosperity or a good result) or nāndīmukha śrāddha (śrāddha for Ancestors with cheerful faces) is prescribed. It is performed on an auspicious day in the fortnight of the waxing moon during the morning and according to Śāṅkh.Gr.[30] it should be performed after a śrāddha ceremony for the maternal ancestors (wives of the three paternal Ancestors) has taken place. An even number of brahmins is invited, the performer wears his sacred thread in the auspicious direction and the ceremonies are performed from left to right (the auspicious direction). Svadhā (the term usually used in addressing offerings to Ancestors) is omitted and the Ancestors are addressed as 'nāndīmukha' rather than 'imperishable' in the mantras. Barley replaces the sesame normally used in śrāddhas and the piṇḍas are made out of meal mixed with dadhi (yoghurt), jujube fruits and fried grain.

Some sources mention the pañcamī śrāddha (fifth day śrāddha), which is said to be for those who desire a son. It is performed on the fifth day of the light or on the seventh day of the dark fortnight. It follows the main rules for māsika śrāddha but requires preparatory observances for a whole year and includes a śrāddha for maternal Ancestors. After the recitation of various texts accompanying the brahmins' meal the couple

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[30] 4:4:3

consume the rice balls offered to the Ancestors, the wife eating the middle _piṇḍa_.
(Gonda R.V. p.449-450)

As in G.P. and the ethnography (Eth.6e,G.P.6e), the Ancestors are treated in the same way as gods on auspicious occasions and the ritual practices associated with normal _śrāddhas_ are replaced with those normally associated with worship of the gods.

As seen in G.P. (G.P.6e), _śrāddhas_ associated with auspicious occasions and the promotion of fertility include offerings to female Ancestors as well as male Ancestors. In the ethnography there is evidence of the Vedic practice (Ved.6d) of a woman eating the middle _piṇḍa_ of a _śrāddha_ if she desires a son (Eth.5c); but there when a woman fails to conceive the remedy is an exorcistic rite (Eth.7h) rather than a _śrāddha_ in which the eating of the middle _piṇḍa_ by the wife forms the main purpose of the rite. The move towards exorcistic conception rites from _śrāddhas_ in which the Ancestors are appealed to for progeny may be due to an erosion of the divine qualities of the Ancestors which occurred when they became associated with the cycle of rebirth and re-death (Ved.6d), and so were left only with the negative ability to cause infertility and trouble among their living relatives.

6f. The Gayā Śrāddha.

The Vedic _sūtras_ make no reference to the Gayā _śrāddha_.

Section 7. Untimely Death.

7a. Child Death.

According to the Vedic sutras the bodies of children who have not yet reached their third year, or for whom the tonsure (cūḍākarman) has not yet been performed, should be adorned with flowers and other decorations and buried, or they should be thrown away in a forest. Cremation is an option, however, if the child has teeth but the water offerings (udakriyā), the bone collection and the other rites associated with the funeral of an adult are omitted. Baudhāyana describes a separate rite for a child with teeth, in which the fire is lit from kindling sticks and an offering made with the words,"To N.N and to Yama", at the cremation ground. The lighting of the pyre (upoṣaṇam) is accompanied by the vyāhṛti 'bhūḥ', the worship during the burning of the pyre (upasthāna) by 'bhuvaḥ' and the purificatory bath (avagāhanam) by 'suvaḥ'. There is no reference to the observance of pollution after the funeral or to śrāddhas or annual commemorative rites for children.
(Caland A.T.B. p.93)

As in G.P. and the ethnography (G.P.7a,Eth.7a) the funerals of young children are differentiated from those of adults. As in G.P. (G.P.7a) a distinction is made between the very young, who are buried, and infants, who are cremated. While G.P. simply states that infants are cremated (G.P.7a), Baudhāyana describes the funeral ritual, which differs in two major respects from that

of an adult. Unlike adults, infants are not cremated by means of Vedic fires and the mantras accompanying the normal funeral rites are replaced by the three great vyāhṛtis. The differentiation between the two types of cremation is seen in the ethnography (Eth.7a) where the Nambūtiri brahmins perform cremations for their children without mantras and the rites associated with the disposal of an adult corpse.

In G.P. (G.P.7a.) the infant funeral differs from that of an adult in that water pots and milk puddings are offered instead of the piṇḍas of the first ten days. The Vedic material does not refer to the gift of milk puddings in the case of an infant death and it seems possible that these represent a later development in child funeral ritual. In the earliest stages a child was a complete non-person who had no afterlife in ritual, the funeral proceedings ceasing immediately after the funeral bath but it is possible that some grieving parents sought to establish their dead children as people, who persisted in some form after death. The necessity of feeding rituals for adults may have caused them to start making offerings to children as well, to ensure the best possible fate for them after death. Thus in G.P. (G.P.7a) an infant, like an adult, is fed after death but the piṇḍas offered to an older person are replaced with foods appropriate to a child and these offerings are said to prevent a bad rebirth rather than build a new body for the deceased.

7b. Death Of A Young Unmarried Man Or Woman.

Young boys who have not yet undergone Vedic instruction and unmarried girls are cremated. The burning, however, only uses the mantra,"From this you are born, he/she, N.N., from you has now been reborn, svāhā!" In Gautama-sūtra the verse purifying the cremation area is also used.
(Caland A.T.B. p.93)

As in G.P. (G.P.7b) the funerals for youths and unmarried girls are differentiated from those of adults and those of babies and infants, forming an intermediate stage between the two. It is not clear whether śrāddha rites are performed for youths but on the evidence of G.P. (G.P.7a), where the rites become increasingly like the ghost processing ceremonies of an adult as the child gets older it seems possible that some form of ekoddiṣṭa ceremonies might have been performed for them. As in G.P. (G.P.7b), there is no indication that the spirit of the unmarried youth is feared, unlike in the ethnography (Eth.7b) where a ceremonial marriage is performed with the corpse to satisfy the dangerous ghost's unfulfilled wishes.

7c. Death Without A Son.

The Vedic sūtras contain no references to rites for those who have died without a son.

7d. Women Dying In Childbirth Or Pregnancy.

In the case of a woman dying during pregnancy or childbirth the mother's corpse is taken to the cremation ground and is cut

open with a knife by the husband, son or other relative either behind or to the left of the pyre. This ritual is performed with the words,"In the beginning was the golden gleaming germ". If the child lives the father should say,"It lives for many, many years, shine on my son", as soon as he sees the child. After this the child is washed and handed over to a foster mother. As the child is laid on the breast he says,"This breast which is not dried up"[1]. Afterwards butter offerings are made into the mother's lap, the wound is sewn up again with a needle, the body washed, laid on the pyre and burnt as normal.
(Caland A.T.B. 95-6)

As in G.P. and the ethnography (G.P.7d, Eth.7d) the embryo is removed from the womb of a woman dying in childbirth or pregnancy to find out if it lives, before the corpse of the mother is washed and cremated. As in G.P. (G.P.7d) there is no indication that special rites are performed to prevent the ghost of such a woman troubling the living because of her unfulfilled desires, unlike in the ethnography (Eth.7d) where it would appear that ideas about the perpetual ghost-hood of those dying with unfulfilled wishes has led to the inclusion of various exorcistic procedures which do not appear in the textual material.

7e. Death From Leprosy, Cholera Or Smallpox.

The Vedic sūtras contain no references to special rites for those who have died from leprosy, cholera or smallpox.

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[1] T.A. 4:8:8

7f. Violent Death And Suicide.

The Vedic sūtras contain no reference to special rites for those dying violently or committing suicide.

According to Manu[2] those who have committed suicide are not entitled to water libations but the list which excludes suicide, other forms of violent death and lepers from cremation, bone collection and śrāddha offerings first makes its appearance in Puranic works (G.P.7e,f) as does the nārāyaṇa bali by which relatives restore such a person's right to śrāddha and memorial ceremonies.

7g. Death Under The Wrong Asterism.

If it is feared that a person will die during the night in the light half of the month, an anticipatory morning agnihotra should be performed. According to Āpastamba if a person dies without managing to perform the morning agnihotra then the milk is poured on the cold ash (of the pyre) or becomes the first offering of the funeral rites. If someone is likely to die during the dark half of the month,"So should he (the adhvaryu) take him through the evening and morning offerings in the light half of the month", i.e. the morning and evening offerings still to be offered before the next new moon are given in a single compressed ceremony which is followed by a new moon offering for the Ancestors made without piṇḍas. In Baudhāyana these offerings are

[2] 5:89

made without mantras, making them easier to perform while someone is dying.

(Caland A.T.B. p.6-7)

The offering of the morning agnihotra if a person seems likely to die during the night ensures that he completes his obligatory offerings for the evening and morning agnihotra are counted as one unit so dying during the night would leave the rite unfinished. The anticipatory agnihotra also ensures that in ritual time, if not in literal time, the person dies during the day not during the night. Similarly, the compression of the agnihotras for one who is about to die in the dark half of the month enables him to offer the obligatory new moon rite but also ensures that in ritual terms he dies during the light not the dark half of the month. As Caland points out[3], in the Upaniṣads day and night and the dark and light halves of the month are associated with the two paths which can be taken after death. Those who follow the devayāna and end up in the immortal Brahmā worlds pass through the flame of the pyre and through the light half of the month to reach their destination, while those who follow the pitṛyāna pass through the smoke of the pyre, through the night and the dark half of the month to reach the world of the Ancestors. Although it is not explicitly stated in the ritual texts it seems that it was necessary to die at the time of day and in the part of the month associated with the devayāna in

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[3] A.T.B. p.6

order to travel on it after death. Through the means of anticipatory agnihotra rituals the sacrificer manipulates time, ensuring that he dies during the day in the light half of the month and thus enters the devayāna.

A similar concern that a person should not die during the dark half of the month is seen in G.P. and the ethnography (G.P.7g,Eth.7g) but there the explanation is that it will cause more people to die rather than it sets the deceased off on the wrong path. The association between the time of death and the path taken after death could possibly have disappeared because the devayāna became a path open only to ascetics and was no longer attainable through the manipulation of time with anticipatory agnihotras.

Section 8. Widows.

8a. The Widow's Role In Her Husband's Funeral Ceremonies.

According to Baudhāyana the wives of an āhitāgni, led by the youngest should follow the funeral procession. At each of the three halts they should circumambulate the corpse three times in the auspicious direction with dishevelled hair and three times in the auspicious direction with their hair tied up. At the cremation ground as the corpse lies on the pyre the (chief) wife is ordered to lay down at the side of the corpse while the performer recites,"This woman whom I choose to be of her husband's world, lay down near the corpse, O woman, heading the custom of older days; give descendants to her and well being on earth." The representative of man (either the brother of the dead man, or failing that a brahmin) calls upon her to arise and return to the world of the living. According to Bahvṛcas and the Śaunakins, while he takes hold of her with the left hand he recites the following mantra,"Stand up O woman, come into the world of the living, you lie by a corpse, come down, he who holds your hand will have you, you have now been the wife of your husband." According to the Taittirīyas the second half of the mantra reads,"You belong to the suitor whose hand you are holding; in place of your husband I now take you." the widow then gives a number of gifts but it is not clear what these are and to whom they are given.

During the period of impurity the widow should observe chastity, sleep on the floor, eat only once daily and abstain

from salt and honey and all leguminous grains except sesame. Although the chief mourner and other male relatives shave, Baudhāyana expressly forbids the tonsure of wives.

The later Taittirīyas also describe a further ceremony involving the widow in connection with the dhuvana rites (Ved.6a). In front of the hut erected for the dhuvana ceremonies one born of a śūdra woman or a brahmabandhu (brahmin in name only) sits down and engages in a dialogue with the chief wife asking,"Will you dwell with me?" or,"through me N.N. asks a dwelling place", to which she replies,"I shall not give (what you ask)." The same dialogue is repeated over a number of days but on the last day the widow replies,"I shall give for one night", after which the performer deposits the bones in a hut underneath the pitcher with a hundred holes (Ved.6a).
(Caland A.T.B. p.42-3,136, Śrautakośa v.1 pt.2 p.1042-3, Kane v.4 p.252)

As in G.P. (G.P.3a) women accompany the funeral procession and attend the rites at the cremation ground, unlike in the ethnography (Eth.8a) where high caste women normally follow the cortège only to the outskirts of the village. The reason for this change in practice may simply be due to the idea that the disposal of the body is too harrowing an event for women to attend but it may also be due to a desire to protect the women, bearers of the caste's future children, from the impurity and danger of the cremation ground. Both women and men are subject to

the pollution caused by a death in the family, regardless of whether they attend the cremation or not, but those who attend the funeral ground enter the domain of evil spirits and ghosts. As seen in the ethnography (Eth.2e) care is taken with female corpses lest the ghosts of the cremation ground use them for their own sexual enjoyment and it is possible that this idea extends to living women as well, who by entering the cremation ground become vulnerable to sexual possession by ghosts and evil spirits thus placing the future purity of the caste in jeopardy.

The rite of separation at the cremation ground, in which the wife lies by her husband on the cremation pyre but is then brought back to the world of the living, suggests that the practice of *satī*, which G.P. (G.P.8c) encourages all wives to follow, was not current in Vedic but times developed later. In the ethnography (Eth.8a) the breaking of the woman's bangles and the removal of her marriage ornaments constitutes the major rite of separation and there is no evidence of the Vedic practice of laying the wife beside the corpse then raising her up again. The abandonment of the Vedic rite of separation may be due to the fact that it was associated with the remarriage of the widow or the practice of *niyoga* (Ved.8c). The invitation for the wife to descend from the pyre seems to indicate that she is not only to return to the world of the living but that she is to marry the person (in most cases the brother of the deceased) who hands her down from the pyre. A corresponding practice is found among the low castes and tribes in the ethnography (Eth.8c) where widows

are expected to marry their husbands' younger brothers. The Vedic rite of separation therefore seems to send the widow into a new life as her husband's brother's wife (Ved.8c) whereas among the high castes in the ethnography (Eth.8a,c) the rite of separation in which the marriage tokens are destroyed sends the widow into a new life as a celibate ascetic. In the Vedic material widows are subject to the same restrictions as the male mourners except in the matter of tonsure, unlike in the ethnography (Eth.8a) where the widow's head may also be shaved.

The meaning of the ceremony in which the widow engages in a ritual dialogue with the śūdra or brahmabandhu is obscure. Kane[1] suggests that it was intended to ensure the deceased man that his wife has remained faithful and unattached to anyone else even long after his death. Such an explanation does not seem to take into account, however, that the ceremony concludes with the wife acceding to the demand of the śūdra or brahmabandhu. Caland suggests[2] that the denials of the wife constitute a formal protest against the removal and final interment of her husband's bones. The loṣṭaciti represents the final installation of the bones in their resting place, completing the transition of the husband to the world of the dead and the repeated refusals ending in the wife's capitulation seem to make better sense than in Kane's explanation.

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[1] v.4 p.252-3

[2] A.T.B. p.174

8b. Treatment Of Widows.

The śrauta-sūtras and the gṛhya-sūtras do not refer to the way in which widows should live after the period of primary pollution is ended.

According to Manu a widow should emaciate her body, subsisting on flowers, roots and fruits; she should be celibate, forbearing and must not even mention the name of another man until her death[3]. It would therefore seem from the earliest smṛtis that a widow was expected to live the life of a celibate ascetic and it is possible that this was expected from a widow at the time of the Vedic sūtras. This would, however, contradict the impression given in the rite of separation that a widow should marry her husband's brother (Ved.8a,c) and it seems possible that this represents a development which replaced earlier customs of widow re-marriage or niyoga with the ascetic practices which had formerly been confined to the period of primary pollution.

8c. Remarriage Of Widows.

The Vedic śrauta and gṛhya-sūtras make no specific statements about the remarriage of widows.

The mantras accompanying the invitation for the wife to come down from the funeral pyre suggest that at one time widow remarriage of the sort seen in the low castes and tribes of the ethnography (Eth.8c) may have been practised. The sūtras,

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[3] 5:157-160

however, contain no reference to such a practice but the dharma-sūtras and smṛtis do refer to niyoga, by which a woman whose husband is dead and who desires offspring may secure a son from her brother-in-law. Niyoga is not confined to widows but may also be resorted to by women whose husbands are alive but unable to give them children. The practice described in these works is subject to many restrictions and Manu, having described niyoga ultimately condemns it in the strongest possible terms[4]. Kane[5] suggests that niyoga was an ancient practice which by the time of the smṛtis and dharma-sūtras was either condemned outright or had become subject to so many restrictions that it was rarely if ever practised. It is possible that the invitation to the wife to dismount the funeral pyre refers not to widow remarriage of the type seen in the ethnography (Eth.8c) but to niyoga in which a childless widow was entitled to have children by her brother-in-law.

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[4] 9:69-70

[5] v.2 ptl p.602

Conclusion.

In the course of this thesis I have traced the variation of individual rituals of the Hindu funeral ceremony over time, starting with ethnographic material and going back to the Purāṇas and then to the Vedas. To conclude I will summarize the variation in the funeral ceremony as a whole. As stated in the introduction, the Purāṇas and Vedas are texts written by brahmins for brahmins and virtually nothing is known about non-brahminical culture until the advent of modern ethnography. Thus, the only variation of ritual and ideology over time that we can trace with certainty is that of the brahmins.

The basic form of the funeral ceremony appears to have remained unchanged from the time of the Vedas to the ethnography. It seems, however, that there has been a gradual simplification of elements within this basic structure and a reduction in the time it takes to perform them. This reduction in the time taken has sometimes caused inconsistency between ritual and belief: for example, the early performance of the sapiṇḍīkaraṇam has meant that offerings made to the ghost on the twelve months of his journey take the form of offerings to the deceased as an Ancestor.

Most of the features of this basic structure are held in common with other Indo-European cultures. If, for instance, one looks at the basic structure of the funeral ceremony in Ancient and Classical Greece as described by Garland, it corresponds closely with that of the Hindu funeral ceremony: the eyes and the

mouth were closed at death[1]; a coin was placed in the mouth or grave for boat-fare[2]; the corpse was ritually bathed[3]; a sacrifice to the deities of the underworld was made before the funeral procession set out[4]; the funeral procession was accompanied by music[5]; offerings to the dead person were made during the corpse disposal[6]; the relatives took a purificatory bath on return from the cremation ground[7]; food and drink was left at the place of disposal on the third and ninth day after death[8]; mourning ended on the thirtieth day with a feast for relatives, in which the deceased was believed to participate[9]; infants dying before their first teeth were always buried and never cremated[10]; and the unmarried dead were dressed in their wedding clothes for the funeral[11]. It is interesting that some of the features- e.g., the coin in the mouth to pay the fare; the music at the funeral procession; and the end of the transitional

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[1] p.23

[2] p.23

[3] p.24

[4] p.33

[5] p.32

[6] p.36

[7] p.44

[8] p.40

[9] p.40-41

[10] p.78-79

[11] p.25

period being marked by a feast in which the deceased is supposed to participate- are found in the funeral ceremonies of the outcastes/tribes but not in those of the high castes and brahmins. It is possible that some of the features found in outcaste/tribal funerals represent the survival of ancient Indo-European practices, though in the absence of written records we can never be certain.

Although the ritual structure of funeral ceremony has remained unchanged since Vedic times, a major change in ideology has taken place. In the Vedic material the world is created and sustained by sacrifice. If a person spends his life performing Vedic sacrifices he is cremated in a self-sacrifice resembling the cosmic sacrifice which creates and sustains the world. Through this, he escapes going to the world of Ancestors and eventual rebirth but instead goes to the Brahma-worlds from which there is no return. Vedic funeral ritual also contains another ideology, inconsistent with sacrificial theory, in which the deceased becomes an Ancestor in the world of Ancestors, from whence he is summoned by regular śrāddhas. In Purāṇic literature death is instead a journey through a mythological landscape to the kingdom of Yama, where the deceased is judged according to his deeds and allotted an appropriate rebirth. At the same time Puranic texts also hold the inconsistent belief that the deceased is an Ancestor in the Ancestor world, who can be summoned to partake in śrāddha rites. It is this Purāṇic ideology which is held by most Hindus recorded in the ethnography. It is

interesting that while the Vedic ideology has little in common with other Indo-European cultures, the Purāṇic picture of death corresponds closely with the Hades of the Greco-Roman world, a mythological landscape of mires, filth, monsters and a lake/river which must be crossed by boat[12].

The earlier ideology of sacrifice did not disappear completely; G.P. and the brahmins of the ethnography still maintain that the deceased is sacrificed on the pyre. The change in ideology does not seem greatly to have affected the basic structure of the funeral ceremony but some rituals were dropped and others were added. The most notable addition was the gift of the Vaitaraṇī cow and the ten last gifts, to provide the deceased with necessities for the journey and the means of crossing the terrible river Vaitaraṇī.

It would seem that practice is more conservative than interpretation. Not only does it remain largely unchanged by time, despite major changes in ideology, but it also remains unchanged throughout different social groups. Low caste Hindus perform many of the same rites as the high caste Hindus although they may offer different interpretations of them: for example, all groups make offerings on the way to the funeral ground but brahmins say that they are made to evil spirits and tribes say they are to prevent the deceased from following the mourners home.

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[12] Garland p.49-51

Funeral practice always reflects the mourners' primary emotional ambivalence to death but it does not always reflect their secondary cultural constructs: Vedic ideology, for instance, has no real place for repugnance and fear of the dead person, for on the pyre he re-enacts the cosmic sacrifice which sustains the world. The Vedic funeral ceremony, however, contains ritual washing of the corpse and the observance of pollution by the mourners, both of which suggest that the dead person is unclean and the funeral also contains a number of mantras in which the spirit of the deceased is told to go away and leave the world of the living, suggesting that the mourners fear his ghost.

Finally, the explanation for a practice may reflect the primary emotional response to death but contradict the major social constructs of the participants: beliefs surrounding śrāddhas, for example, are at variance with both the Vedic and Puranic ideologies of death. It seems that the emotional response that the dead are always with us and watch over what we do prompts people to make offerings to their dead in the Ancestor world, even when they say that the person has not gone to the Ancestor world (as in Vedic theory) or that a person is judged according to his karma and allotted an appropriate rebirth (as in Purāṇic theory). There is some attempt to integrate belief in śrāddha with the theory of reincarnation, in which it is said that the śrāddha goes to intermediaries who then redistribute it but it has no effect on belief about the śrāddha rites

themselves, which continue to be regarded as rites to which the deceased are summoned in the form of Ancestors.

Finally, some rites appear to be for one purpose but are explained as being for another purpose: brahmins, for instance say they perform different rites for those who have died an untimely death because of bad karma but the performance of mock marriage ceremonies for the unmarried dead would seem to be concerned with preventing trouble from a dangerous ghost than dealing with bad karma.

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v.XII	Khāndesh	1880
v.XIII pt.I	Thāna	1882
v.XVI	Nāsik.	1883
v.XVIII pt.I	Poona.	1885
v.XIX	Sātāra.	1885
v.XX	Sholāpur.	1884
v.XXI	Belgaum.	1884
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APPENDIX.

The Sources Used By Caland In His Summaries Of Vedic Ritual.

A detailed survey of these works and their relationship with each other can be found in Caland's Die Altindischen Todten- und Bestattungsgebräuche p.IV-XII. A useful summary of the available printed editions of the sūtra works can be found in Śrautakośa: English Section v.I pt.I p.13-18.

THE TAITTIRĪYA SCHOOL.

1. **Baudhāyana.**

   Baudhāyana Pitṛmedha-sūtra. A work in two sections (praśnas), the second of which is a later addition which Caland refers to as Secondary Baudhāyana.

2. Bhāradvāja, Āpastamba, Hiraṇyakeśin.

   Bhāradvāja Pitṛmedha-sūtra, Āpastamba Pitṛmedha-sūtra, and Satyāṣāḍha Hiraṇyakeśin Pitṛmedha-sūtra. Three related works referred to by Caland as the more recent Taittirīyas.

Secondary Material Of The Taittirīya School.

1. Prayoga for the pitṛmedha of an āhitāgni following Baudhāyana, mainly using the secondary rites. Referred to by Caland as Prayoga Tanjore. M.S. Tanjore 3476
2. Keśavasvāmin's Baudhāyanīyapaddhati. M.S. India Office 604
3. Veṅkateśa's Sanirṇayaprayogamālā: of great importance for the complete Baudhāyana gṛhya rites. Bombay 1886
4. Harihara's Antyeṣṭipaddhati: ritual for the anāhitāgni following Bhāradvāja. M.S. I.O. 482

5. Prayoga for the brahmamedha using the rites of the more recent Taittirīya schools. Referred to by Caland as Brahmamedhaprayoga. Tanjore 3897

6. Loṣṭacitiprayoga. Referred to by Caland as Prayoga Burnell. M.S. Burnell, catalogue of a collection no. CXXI

7. Pitṛmedhasāra with the commentary called sudhīvilocana: extremely rich in important quotations it deals with the antyeṣṭi (here known as the avabhṛtheṣṭi) for an anāhitāgni, following the rites of the more recent Taittirīyas.

8. Vīrarāghavasūri's Prayogadarpaṇa: ritual of the whole antyeṣṭi following the more recent Taittirīya schools.

THE VAIKHĀNASA SCHOOL.

The rites of the Vaikhānasa school are to be found in the Vaikhānasa Gṛhya-sūtra and the Vaikhānasa Dharma-sūtra.

THE MĀNAVA SCHOOL.

The rites of the Mānavas are found in the so-called Anugrāhika-sūtra. M.S. Buhler no.35 fol.7 a.4; M.S. Haug. no.53 fol.195a.

THE KAṬHA SCHOOL.

The rites of the Kaṭhas are found in the text known as Gṛhyapañcikā, where the funeral rites are known as the parācī or the parācīkarma. hs.B[1] fol.114.a, fol.46.b

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THE MĀDHYANDINA SCHOOL.

The rites of the Mādhyandinas are found primarily in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa XII.5.1 following and XIII.8.1 following and the Kātyāyana Śrauta-sūtra XXV.7.8 following and XXI.3.4.

Secondary Material Of The Mādhyandina School.

1. Viśvanātha's Aurdhvadehika Paddhati M.S. Chambers 37
2. Rāmakṛṣṇa, son of Maureśvara's Antyeṣṭyarka: following the sūtras as compiled by Viśvanātha and the "Prayogābdhi".

THE ŚAUNAKIN SCHOOL.

The most interesting rites of the Śaunakins are those preserved in the Kauśika-sūtra 80-86 inclusive (published by Bloomfield).

Secondary Material Of The Śaunakin School.

1. A few rites are to be found in Atharvavedasya Saṃhitāvidher vivaraṇam. M.S. Berl. or fol.(see Bloomfield, introduction to the Kauśika-sūtra p.XIV)

THE RĀṆĀYANĪYA SCHOOL.

Caland argues that the Gautama-sūtra represents the funeral rites of the Rāṇāyanīyas on the ground that part of it forms an earlier Śrāddhakalpa which has been reworked under the influence of the Secondary Baudhāyana rites to form the Gautama-sūtra.

Secondary Material Of The Rāṇāyanīya School.

1. Kṛṣṇa Dīkṣita's Aurdhvadehikaprayoga: following the sūtra without saying anything really new. M.S. I.O. 481

THE KAUTHUMA SCHOOL.

According to Caland the funeral rites of the Kauthamas are to be found not so much in the Lāṭyāyana-sūtra as in the earlier Karmapradīpa III.1-4 inclusive.

Secondary Material Of The Kauthuma School.

1. Subrahmaṇyavidvān's Anteṣṭidīpikā: following tradition,the Lāṭyāyana-sūtra, and the Karmapradīpa. Benares 1886

THE ĀŚVALĀYANA SCHOOL.

Āśvalāyana Śrauta-sūtra, Āśvalāyana Gṛhya-sūtra, and the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.

Secondary Material Of The Āśvalāyana School.

1. Nārāyaṇabaṭṭa's Āhitāgnividhi. M.S. India Office no.1158
2. Āśvalāyanapariśiṣṭa in the publication by Bib. Ind.
3. Antyeṣṭiprayoga from the manuscript collection of the palace in Tanjore. Tanjore no.3478

THE ŚĀṄKHĀYANA SCHOOL.

Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta-sūtra IV.14,15,16

Secondary Material Of The Śāṅkhāyana School.

1. Caland knows of no prayoga for the anāhitāgni but suggests that it is the poorly written Aurdhvadehikapaddhati. M.S. Chambers 287

Key To Tables.

The tables are arranged according to geographical region, starting in the North of India and moving South. The communities within each region are arranged by social group, following their caste classification in the ethnographies, and within each group they are arranged in alphabetical order. The geographical region covered by each table is given in the top left hand corner, as is the principal source from which the material was obtained. The material from the primary source has, in some tables, been supplemented by information from monographs. Where the description of a particular caste or tribe has not been taken from the primary source, this is indicated by a number at the bottom of the column containing the caste name. A list of works corresponding to the numbers is found at the end of the key.

There is some overlap of material in the South India section but it seemed worthwhile to include both Thurston's work on the whole of South India and the separate ethnographies on Mysore and Cochin; the latter works give more detailed descriptions of funeral rites but Thurston provides a broad overall perspective of South Indian funeral ritual. In some cases Thurston merely repeats a description found in the works on Mysore and Cochin and in these cases his account was omitted from the table.

The tables are divided into individual rituals, which are separated by thin black lines; and stages, which are separated by thick black lines. The stages and the rituals within them correspond with the scheme adopted in the text of the thesis. Not

all communities perform the same ritual at the same point in the funeral ceremony, but general patterns of ritual order can be seen and these are adopted in the scheme. In order to prevent the tables from becoming overly complicated, all communities are treated as if they follow the standard order of ritual.

Grade Of Description.

The descriptions from which the information for each community is taken are graded according to length.

A A description of over 300 words.

B A description of approximately 50 to 300 words.

C A description of approximately 50 words or less.

Key To Symbols.

✓ The ritual is performed by the community.

+ The ritual is performed and an explanation is given for it.

x The ritual is not performed by the community.

x+ The ritual is not performed and an explanation is given for its non-performance.

S The ritual is performed by some members of the community.

U The ritual is performed if the death is untimely.

Key To Extra Sources.

1 Dangerous wives and sacred sisters; social and symbolic roles of high caste women in Nepal by L. Bennett.

2 Hindus of the Himalayas by G. Berreman.

3 Les rites funéraires des hautes castes hindouistes Néwar (Nepal) by G. Toffin.

4 In search of identity: a case of the Santal of Northern India by M. Gautam

5 Bihār District Gazetteers: Palamau

6 Bihār and Orissa District Gazetteers: Sambalpur

7 Bihār District Gazetteers:Palamau

8 Bihār and Orissa District Gazetteers: Sambalpur

9 ibid.

10 Bihār District Gazetteers: Palamau

11 Bihār District Gazetteers: Santal Parganas

12 Bihār District Gazetteers: Ranchi

13 Bihār District Gazetteers: Palamau

14 The Baiga by V. Elwin

15 The Maria Gonds of Bastar by W. Grigson

16 The Gond and Bhumia of Eastern Mandla by S. Fuchs

17 The Muria and their Ghotal by V. Elwin

18 The Pardhans of the Upper Valley by S. Hivale

19 The rites of the twice-born by M. Stevenson

20 The Warlis by K. Save

21 Funeral Ceremonies and Brahmin Ancestor Worship by B. Aiyangar

22 Hindu manners, customs and ceremonies by J. Dubois

23 Un sous-caste de L'Inde du Sud: organisation sociale et religion des Pramalai Kallar by L. Dumont

24 Religion and society among the Coorgs of South India by M. Srinivas

25 The Gonds of Andhra-Pradesh by C. Furer

Nepal, the N West Provinces & Oudh: taken from *The Tribes & Castes of the North West Provinces & Oudh* by W Crooke	BRAHMINS		CASTE HINDUS											OUTCASTES/TRIBES																			
	GUJERĀTI	SĀRASWATI	AHĪR	CHETRI[1]	GOLAPŪRAB	KALWĀR	KANPHATA	MĀRWĀRI	OSWĀL	RAMAIYA	SEJWĀRI	SIRKANDA HINDUS[2]	ŚRESṬHA[3]	AGARIYA	AHERIYA	AUDHIYA	BAHELIYA	BAISWĀR	BĀNSPHOR	BARWĀR	BASOR	BHANGI	BHĀR	BHĪL	BHOKSA	BHOT	BHUIYA	BHUIYAR	BIND	BIYĀR	CHAMĀR	DĀNGI	DHĀNGAR
Length of description	C	C	C	A	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	A	C	B	C	B	B	B	B	C	A	C	A	C	C	B	B	B	A	A	B	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area								✓				✓	+				✓										✓	✓		✓			
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse				✓				✓				✓	✓				✓																
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse							✓					✓	+				✓					✓										X	

Nepal, the N West Provinces & Oudh: taken from *The Tribes & Castes of the North West Provinces & Oudh* by W Crooke

	BRAHMINS		CASTE HINDUS											OUTCASTES/TRIBES																			
	GUJERÂTI	SÂRASWATI	AHÎR	CHETRI[1]	GOLAPÛRAB	KALWÂR	KANPHATA	MÂRWÂRI	OSWÂL	RAMAIYA	SEJWÂRI	SIRKANDA HINDUS[2]	ŚREṢṬHA[3]	AGARIYA	AHERIYA	AUDHIYA	BAHELIYA	BAISWÂR	BÂNSPHOR	BARWÂR	BASOR	BHANGI	BHÂR	BHÎL	BHOKSA	BHOT	BHUIYA	BHUIYAR	BIND	BIYÂR	CHAMÂR	DÂNGI	DHÂNGAR
Length of description	C	C	C	A	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	A	C	B	C	B	B	B	B	C	A	C	A	C	C	B	B	B	A	A	B	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area								✓				✓	+				✓										✓	✓		✓			
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse				✓				✓				✓	✓				✓																
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse							✓					✓	+				✓					✓										X	
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status				✓			✓																									✓	
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																						✓											
Use of *śeṣa*																																	
Use of coconuts																																	
Music at the house or during the procession		✓											✓																				
Fire-pot carried in procession																																	
Halt on way to funeral ground																																	
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																																	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession								✓	✓		✓	✓																				✓	
Cremation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	+	+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water			U				✓		U						+				U	U		✓	U			U		U	U				
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse				✓			✓			✓			✓									✓		✓		X						✓	
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed													✓																				
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial				✓																													
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial							✓																										
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave					✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Shaving the chief mourner			✓	✓								✓	✓		✓		✓			✓			✓				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths				✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	S		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Looking for footprints												+																					
Leaving lamp at place where person died				✓																													
Purification of house where person died														✓																			
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased	✓			✓								+																					
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals																									✓								
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓		✓	✓		✓			X		X		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days	✓		✓	✓									+				✓	✓	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓		
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days													+																				
Making a substitute crow																																	
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		+	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		X		✓	✓		✓	
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person																															✓		
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																																	
Caste dinners	✓			✓								✓			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner	✓																													✓			
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam				✓									✓																				
Bull release													✓																				
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death		✓		✓					X	✓		✓	✓		X	✓				✓													
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date				✓	✓	✓	✓		X	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		X	✓	✓	+	✓	✓	
Permanent memorial of dead person							✓					+												✓									
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death		✓	✓		+				✓				✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks				✓																									✓	✓			✓
Shaving the widow's head				S																													
Widow marriage			✓		X	✓				✓	✓	✓		S	✓		S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	S	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother			✓			✓				✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Length of primary pollution in days	10	10		13		10	X		X	8	10			10	13		10		10		8		10				10		10	10		13	10

Nepal, the N West Provinces & Oudh: continued	OUTCASTES/TRIBES																											
	DHÂNUK	DHARKÂR	DOM	DUSÂDH	GHASIYA	HÂBÛRA	JÂT	KÂCHHI	KAHÂR	KANJAR	KAPARIYA	KHÂGI	KHARWÂR	KHATÎK	KOIRI	KOL	KORWA	MAJHWÂR	MALLÂH	MUSAHAR	PANKA	PARAHIYA	PÂSI	RÂJI	SAHARIYA	SÂNSIYA	SANTAL	THARU
Length of description	C	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	B	C	C	B	C	C	A	B	A	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area													+			✓	✓	✓									✓	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse													✓					✓					✓			✓		
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse																										S		

Nepal, the N West Provinces & Oudh: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES																											
	DHÂNUK	DHARKÂR	DOM	DUSÂDH	GHASIYA	HÂBURA	JÂT	KÂCHHI	KAHÂR	KANJAR	KAPARIYA	KHÂGI	KHARWÂR	KHATÎK	KOIRI	KOL	KORWA	MAJHWÂR	MALLÂH	MUSAHAR	PANKA	PARAHIYA	PÂSI	RÂJI	SAHARIYA	SÂNSIYA	SANTAL	THARU
Length of description	C	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	B	C	C	B	C	C	A	B	A	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	A[4]	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area													+			✓	✓	✓									✓	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse													✓					✓					✓			✓		
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse																										S		
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status																			✓	✓								✓
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																												
Use of *śeṣa*																												
Use of coconuts																												
Music at the house or during the procession																												
Fire-pot carried in procession																												
Halt on way to funeral ground										S																		
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																											✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession																		+									✓	
Cremation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water	U	✓	✓	U		✓		U	U	✓						U	✓	U	U		U	U		✓	U	✓		U
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse					✓	✓											✓	✓						✓			+	✓
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed																		✓										
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial																												
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial				✓									✓															
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave		✓	✓								✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Shaving the chief mourner		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths		✓	S	✓	✓					S	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	S
Looking for footprints																+												
Leaving lamp at place where person died																												S
Purification of house where person died																		✓										
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased																												
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals																												
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days		✓	✓	✓			✓					X	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X		✓	
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days		✓								X				✓	✓				✓	✓								
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days																												
Making a substitute crow																												
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers				✓		X		✓		X	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓											+	S
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person								✓																				
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																		✓								✓		
Caste dinners				✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner		+			✓																						✓	
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																												
Bull release																												
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death											✓				X		X											
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	X	✓				✓						
Permanent memorial of dead person						✓							✓					X		S								
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓		✓					✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks																✓												
Shaving the widow's head																												
Widow marriage		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Length of primary pollution in days			10	7		12					9	11	10					10		10	10			X	8	4	5 to 9	10

Bengal: taken from *The Tribes & Castes of Bengal* by H H Risley

	CASTE HINDUS																																
	AGARWÂLA	AMÂT	BAURI	BÂNWAR	BHANDÂRI	CHÂSA	CHEROs	DHÂNUK	HALWAI	JOGI	KÂMI	KAUR	KHATWE	KOIRI	KUMHÂR	KURMI	MAHILI	MÂL	MÂLO	MAYARÂ	NÂPIT	NUNIÂ	PARGHA	RÂJPUT	RAJWÂR	RAUTIA	SARNAKÂR	SONÂR	SUBARNABANIK	SUKLI	SUNRI	SÛTRADHAR	TÂMBULI
Length of description	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area																																	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse																																	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse																										✓							

Bengal: taken from *The Tribes & Castes of Bengal* by H H Risley

	CASTE HINDUS																																
	AGARWĀLA	AMĀT	BAURI	BĀNWAR	BHANDĀRI	CHĀSA	CHERO [5]	DHĀNUK	HALWAI	JOGI	KĀMI	KAUR	KHATWE	KOIRI	KUMHĀR	KURMI	MAHILI	MĀL	MĀLO	MAYARĀ	NĀPIT	NUNIĀ	PARGHA	RĀJPUT	RAJWĀR	RAUTIA	SARNAKĀR	SONĀR	SUBARNABANIK	SUKLI	SUNRI	SŪTRADHAR	TĀMBULI
Length of description	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area																																	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse																																	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse																										✓							
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status																										✓							
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																																	
Use of *śesa*																										✓							
Use of coconuts																																	
Music at the house or during the procession																	✓																
Fire-pot carried in procession																																	
Halt on way to funeral ground																																	
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																																	
Offering of food, *pindas*, and/or money during procession																																	
Cremation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water	U	U	+	✓	U	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓		✓					U				U							
Offering of food, *pindas*, and/or money to the corpse										+																							
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed																																	
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial																																	
Offering food, *pindas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial						✓				✓																							
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓	✓				✓	✓				✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓	✓							✓
Shaving the chief mourner			✓								✓	✓																					
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths										✓																✓							
Looking for footprints																																	
Leaving lamp at place where person died																																	
Purification of house where person died																																	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased																										✓							
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals											✓																						
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days					✓		✓					✓			✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓							
Offering and worship of *pindas* during the first twelve days																										✓							
Offering of food and/or *pindas* to crows during the first twelve days																																	
Making a substitute crow																																	
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers							✓																	✓		✓							
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person																																	
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																																	
Caste dinners			✓				✓				✓	✓														✓							
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																																	
Sapindīkaranam																																	
Bull release																																	
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death	✓			X																				✓		✓							
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date		✓		X	✓						X		✓		✓		✓	+						+		✓		✓					
Permanent memorial of dead person																																	
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓						✓		+			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks																																	
Shaving the widow's head																																	
Widow marriage		✓	✓	S	✓	✓	✓	S	S	X	✓			✓	S	✓		✓	X				✓		S	+s	X	S	X	X	S	X	+s
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓					✓		✓								✓		✓					
Length of primary pollution in days			11							11	10															10							

Bengal: continued

	CASTE HINDUS			OUTCASTES/TRIBES																													
	TĀNTI	JĀT BAISHTAM	SPASHTA DĀYAKA	BĀGDI	BHAKAT	BHUMIJ	BINJHAL [6]	BIRHOR	BIRJA [7]	CHAKMĀ	CHAMĀR	DONIMAL	DOM	GANDA [8]	GOND [9]	GULGULIA	HĀRI	HO	JUANG	KĀDAR	KANDH	KHAMBU	KHARIA	KHARWĀR	KHOCHI	KORWA [10]	LIMBU	MAGH	MĀLE	MĀL PAHĀRIA [11]	MANGAR	MECH	MUCHI
Length of description	C	C	C	C	C	A	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	B	C	A	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area																																	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse																																	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse							✓											✓												✓			

Bengal: continued

	CASTE HINDUS			OUTCASTES/TRIBES																													
	TĀNTI	JĀT BAISHTAM	SPASHTA DĀYAKA	BĀGDI	BHAKAT	BHUMIJ	BINJHAL [6]	BIRHOR	BIRJA [7]	CHAKMĀ	CHAMĀR	DONIMAL	DOM	GANDA [8]	GOND [9]	GULGULIA	HĀRI	HO	JUANG	KĀDAR	KANDH	KHAMBU	KHARIA	KHARWĀR	KHOCHI	KORWA [10]	LIMBU	MAGH	MĀLE	MĀL PAHĀRIA [11]	MANGAR	MECH	MUCHI
Length of description	C	C	C	C	C	A	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	B	C	A	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area																																	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse																																	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse							✓											✓												✓			
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status							✓			✓													✓				✓	✓					
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																																	
Use of *śesa*																																	
Use of coconuts																																	
Music at the house or during the procession											✓							✓										✓					
Fire-pot carried in procession																																	
Halt on way to funeral ground																														✓			
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																																	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession									✓																					✓			
Cremation	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water		✓	✓	U	U		✓			U	✓		✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse			✓													+		✓									✓			✓	✓	✓	
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed																																	
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial						✓												✓															
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial						✓															+												
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓							
Shaving the chief mourner							✓	✓	✓																	✓							
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths							✓		✓				✓													✓				✓			
Looking for footprints																																	
Leaving lamp at place where person died			✓																														
Purification of house where person died																																	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased																																	
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals							✓			✓					+																		
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days		X	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓			✓		✓								✓	
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days																														✓			
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days																																	
Making a substitute crow																																	
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers						✓				✓																				✓			
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person																																	
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																														✓			
Caste dinners		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓				✓		✓			✓						✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																													✓	✓			
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																																	
Bull release																																	
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death										✓										✓										✓			
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date					✓						✓	✓							✓	X				✓	✓		X						
Permanent memorial of dead person			✓			✓			✓									✓					✓										
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death				✓	✓		✓			✓			✓										✓		✓								✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks																																	
Shaving the widow's head																																	
Widow marriage	S	✓		S	✓	S	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓	S	✓		S		✓	✓	✓	S	S		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother						✓	+								✓	✓	X	✓					✓						✓	✓			
Length of primary pollution in days								10					10												30	10	9		5	X			

Bengal: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES					
	MUNḌĀ [12]	ORAON	PĀN	PARHAIYA [13]	THĀRU	TIPPERAH
Length of description	B	A	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area						
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse						
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse						

Bengal: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES					
	MUNDĀ 12	ORAON	PĀN	PARHAIYA 13	THĀRU	TIPPERAH
Length of description	B	A	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area						
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse						
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse						
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status						
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied						
Use of *śeṣa*						
Use of coconuts						
Music at the house or during the procession		S				
Fire-pot carried in procession						
Halt on way to funeral ground						
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt						
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession		✓				✓
Cremation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water	✓		✓	U	✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse		✓				
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed						
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/ burial						
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/ or drink at the area of cremation/burial		✓				✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave		✓		✓	✓	
Shaving the chief mourner				✓	✓	
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths		✓		✓		
Looking for footprints	✓					
Leaving lamp at place where person died						
Purification of house where person died						
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased						
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals						
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days			✓			
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days						
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days						
Making a substitute crow						
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers				✓		
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person						
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal		✓				
Caste dinners		✓			+	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner				✓		
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam						
Bull release						
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death		✓				✓
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓					
Permanent memorial of dead person	✓					✓
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓	+		✓	✓	✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks						
Shaving the widow's head						
Widow marriage	S	✓	✓	S	✓	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother			✓			
Length of primary pollution in days				10	+ 10	

The Central Provinces:

taken from *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces* by R Russell

	CASTES																													
	BRAHMIN	AGHARIA	AHIR	VAISṆÂVITE BANIA	LIṄGÂYAT BANIA	OSWÂL BANIA	PARWÂR BANIA	BARAI	BISHNOI	CHADÂR	DHÂKAR	DHANGAR	DHÎMAR	DUMÂL	GOWÂRI	GÛJARS	GURAO	HALBA	HATKAR	JÂT	JOGI	KÂCHHI	KATIA	KOSHTI	KUNBI	KURMI	MÂLI	PANWÂR	RÂJPUT	TAMERA
Length of description	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	B	C	C	B	A	C	C	C	C	C	B	A	A	C	A	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area																										✓				
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse			✓														✓									✓				
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse																									✓	✓				

The Central Provinces:
taken from *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces* by R Russell

	CASTES																													
	BRAHMIN	AGHARIA	AHIR	VAISṆĀVITE BANIA	LIÑGÂYAT BANIA	OSWÂL BANIA	PARWÂR BANIA	BARAI	BISHNOI	CHADÂR	DHÂKAR	DHANGAR	DHÎMAR	DUMÂL	GOWÂRI	GÛJARS	GURAO	HALBA	HATKAR	JÂT	JOGI	KÂCHHI	KATIA	KOSHTI	KUNBI	KURMI	MÂLI	PANWÂR	RÂJPUTA	TAMERA
Length of description	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	B	C	C	B	A	C	C	C	C	C	B	A	A	C	A	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area																										✓				
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse			✓														✓									✓				
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse																									✓	✓				
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status		✓												✓										✓		✓			✓	
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																										✓				
Use of *śeṣa*																														
Use of coconuts																														
Music at the house or during the procession																														
Fire-pot carried in procession																	✓											✓		
Halt on way to funeral ground																	✓								✓	✓				
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																														
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession																									✓	✓				
Cremation	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	X			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Burial or disposal in water	U	U	✓	U	✓		U	U	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	U		✓	✓	U	✓	U	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse	✓																				✓					+				✓
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed																									✓	✓				
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial																										+				
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial				✓								✓																		
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave		✓				X							✓													✓		✓		
Shaving the chief mourner					X		X				✓		✓					✓							✓	✓		✓		
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths									✓									✓							✓	+				
Looking for footprints			✓																							S				
Leaving lamp at place where person died										✓			✓																	+
Purification of house where person died						X	✓						✓															✓		
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased																	✓						✓		✓					
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals			✓								✓				✓															
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days		✓	✓							✓				✓												+	✓			✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days	✓						X			✓															✓	✓				
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days											✓														+					
Making a substitute crow																									✓					
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓	✓									✓					✓									✓	✓				
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person														✓										✓						
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																														
Caste dinners						✓	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓								✓	✓	✓				✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																								✓	✓	✓				
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																														
Bull release	✓																			✓										
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death		✓																						X		✓				
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date			✓			X				✓			✓					✓					X	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Permanent memorial of dead person			✓																											
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓			✓				✓				✓		✓		✓	+	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	+		
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks												✓								✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		
Shaving the widow's head																	✓								✓					
Widow marriage	X	✓	✓		✓		X	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	S	
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother			✓		X							X				X				X					+ X					
Length of primary pollution in days		10				X	X	10	X	10		10	10				10							5	10		8			10

Central Provinces: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES																																
	AGARIA	ANDH	AUDHELIA	BAIGA [14]	BANJĀRA	BASOR	BEDAR	BHARIA	BHATRA	BHĪL	BHUIYA	CHAMĀR	DHANWĀR	DHOBA	MARIA GOND [15]	BISON HORN GOND [16]	E MANDLA GOND [17]	KAIKĀRI	KALANGA	KAMĀR	KANJAR	KAWAR	KHAIRWĀR	KHARIA	KHOND	KOL	KOLĀM	KOLHĀTI	KOLI	KORKU	KORWA	MAHĀR	MAJHWĀR
Length of description	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	A	C	A	B	C	C	B	C	A	C	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area				✓			✓								+		✓																
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse		✓		✓													+																+
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse													✓																				

Central Provinces: continued	OUTCASTES/TRIBES																																
	AGARIA	ANDH	AUDHELIA	BAIGA [14]	BANJĀRA	BASOR	BEDAR	BHARIA	BHATRA	BHĪL	BHUIYA	CHAMĀR	DHANWĀR	DHOBA	MARIA GOND [15]	BISON HORN GOND [16]	E MANDLA GOND [17]	KAIKĀRI	KALANGA	KAMĀR	KANJAR	KAWAR	KHAIRWĀR	KHARIA	KHOND	KOL	KOLĀM	KOLHĀTI	KOLI	KORKU	KORWA	MAHĀR	MAJHWĀR
Length of description	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	A	C	A	B	C	C	B	C	A	C	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area				✓			✓								+		✓																
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse		✓		✓													+																+
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse													✓																				
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status						✓	✓					✓					✓					✓											
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																																	
Use of *śesa*																																	
Use of coconuts																																	
Music at the house or during the procession							✓									✓																	
Fire-pot carried in procession																	✓																
Halt on way to funeral ground										✓														✓									
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																																	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession										✓														+									
Cremation	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓	✓	✓					✓	✓					✓	✓			✓	
Burial or disposal in water		✓	U	✓	U	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse				✓					✓		S				✓		✓					+		✓	+						✓		✓
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed																																	
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial																						✓											
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial										✓					✓		✓					✓								✓			
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave			✓	✓													✓					✓						✓					
Shaving the chief mourner			✓	✓										✓			✓							✓			✓					✓	✓
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths				✓										✓	✓	✓	✓			X				✓		✓	✓						
Looking for footprints																	+																
Leaving lamp at place where person died																	✓							✓									
Purification of house where person died														✓	✓		✓	✓														✓	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased														✓								✓											
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals							✓																		✓								
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days			✓					✓								✓												✓			✓		
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days																		✓															
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days							✓																										
Making a substitute crow																																	
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers																	S												✓				
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person								✓																									
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																													✓				
Caste dinners				✓										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									✓		✓			✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																	✓																
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																																	
Bull release																																	
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death																								✓									
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓												✓				✓		✓					✓	✓		✓	+				✓	
Permanent memorial of dead person				✓											✓	✓										✓				✓			
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓		+	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	+				✓	+		✓	X		+		✓	✓						+		
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks				✓								✓				✓																✓	
Shaving the widow's head				X																												X	
Widow marriage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother	✓	X								X	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓								S		✓			✓		
Length of primary pollution in days				10	3	3 to 10		10					3	9 to 10	4			10		3		9 to 10	10			8	1 to 5					3 to 10	5

Central Provinces: continued	OUTCASTES/TRIBES										
	MÂNG	MEHTAR	MURHA	MURIA [17]	ORAON	PARDHAN [18]	PARJA	RÂJJHAR	SAVAR	TAONLA	TURI
Length of description	C	C	C	A	A	A	B	C	B	B	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area						✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse						✓					
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse											
Differential dress on											

Central Provinces: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES										
	MĀNG	MEHTAR	MURHA	MURIA [17]	ORAON	PARDHAN [19]	PARJA	RĀJJHAR	SAVAR	TAONLA	TURI
Length of description	C	C	C	A	A	A	B	C	B	B	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area						✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse						✓					
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse											
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status		✓									
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied											
Use of *śeṣa*											
Use of coconuts											
Music at the house or during the procession											
Fire-pot carried in procession											
Halt on way to funeral ground						✓					
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt					+						
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession				✓							
Cremation		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Burial or disposal in water	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse		✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed											
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial											
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial							✓	✓			
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave			✓		✓						
Shaving the chief mourner											
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓			✓		✓					
Looking for footprints						✓				✓	
Leaving lamp at place where person died					✓						
Purification of house where person died											
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased				✓		✓					
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals				✓		✓				✓	
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days											
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days					✓						
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days				✓							
Making a substitute crow											
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers											
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person											
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal											
Caste dinners			✓	✓			✓	✓			
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner											
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam											
Bull release											
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death						✓					
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
Permanent memorial of dead person				✓							
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death		✓		+		✓			✓		
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks											
Shaving the widow's head											
Widow marriage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother				✓				✓	✓		✓
Length of primary pollution in days	3		3 to 9			10	3 to 9				

Maharashtra and Gujerat: taken from *The Gazatteers of the Bombay Presidencey*	BRAHMINS													CASTE HINDUS																
	GUJERATI	KÂṬHIÂWÂR[19]	CHITPÂVAN	BIJÂPUR DESHASTH	DHÂRWÂR DESHASTH	HAVIG	DHÂRWÂR KANOJ	POONA KANOJ	SÂGARDVIPI	KÂNARA SHENVI	POONA SHENVI	DHÂRWÂR TAILANG	POONA TAILANG	AGRI	BADHIA	BANGAR	BANJIG	BÂRI	BEDAR	BELDÂR	BHADBHUNJA	BHÂVSÂR	CHHETRI	CHIK KURUVINAVAR	JIRE GAVANDI	SAGAR GAVANDI	GAVLI	GAUDI	MARÂTHA GOPAL	BIJÂPUR GURAV
Length of description	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	B	B	A	B	C	B	C	C	C	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	B	B	B	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓				✓									✓				
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓						✓							✓	✓				
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓								✓			✓			✓						
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied		✓	✓																											
[illegible]					✓					✓															✓					

Maharashtra and Gujerat: taken from *The Gazetteers of the Bombay Presidency*

	BRAHMINS													CASTE HINDUS																
	GUJERATI	KÂṬHIÂWÂR [19]	CHITPÂVAN	BIJÂPUR DESHASTH	DHÂRWÂR DESHASTH	HAVIG	DHÂRWÂR KANOJ	POONA KANOJ	SÂGAR ADVIPI	KÂNARA SHENVI	POONA SHENVI	DHÂRWÂR TAILANG	POONA TAILANG	AGRI	BADHIA	BANGAR	BANJIG	BÂRI	BEDAR	BELÂR	BHADBHUNJA	BHÂVSÂR	CHHETRI	CHIK KURUVINAVAR	JIRE GAVANDI	SAGAR GAVANDI	GAVLI	GAUDI	MARÂTHA GOPAL	BIJÂPUR GURAV
Length of description	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	B	B	A	B	C	B	C	C	C	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	B	B	B	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓				✓									✓				
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓						✓							✓	✓				
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓								✓			✓			✓						
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied		✓	✓																											
Use of *śeṣa*					✓					✓															✓					
Use of coconuts	✓																													
Music at the house or during the procession																	✓						✓							
Fire-pot carried in procession	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓					✓		✓		✓			✓					
Halt on way to funeral ground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓						✓			✓	✓				✓				✓
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								✓			✓							✓		✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓								✓			✓	✓				✓				
Cremation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Burial or disposal in water									U					✓		✓	✓			✓	U						✓		✓	✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse		✓		✓		✓				✓						✓					✓				✓	✓				
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓					✓			✓	✓			✓	✓				✓
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial			✓		✓					✓								✓			✓	✓	✓					✓		
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓								✓	✓		✓	✓						✓		✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		
Shaving the chief mourner	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓					✓					X	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			
Looking for footprints																									✓	✓				
Leaving lamp at place where person died			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓							✓		✓					✓					
Purification of house where person died		✓	✓	✓																					✓					
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓												✓					✓
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals		✓																	✓								✓			
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓			✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓					✓						✓			✓			
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days	✓	+	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓				✓				✓				
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days		+	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	X		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		
Making a substitute crow			✓	✓						✓																				
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓						✓	✓	✓				
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person																														
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal			✓												✓			✓						✓		✓	✓			
Caste dinners	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓						✓			✓		✓	✓									
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓					✓																	
Bull release	✓	✓	✓		✓																									
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death	✓		✓		✓					✓	✓	✓	✓																✓	
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓			✓			✓			S	X			✓				✓		✓	
Permanent memorial of dead person																														
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death		✓	✓						✓	✓			✓								✓									
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓													✓							
Shaving the widow's head	✓		✓			✓			✓	✓													X							
Widow marriage	X			X		X			X		X			✓		✓		✓	✓				X	X			✓			
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																														
Length of primary pollution in days	10	10	10	12	10	10		10	10	10		10	10		4					10	9 to 10	10			13	10			10	

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued	CASTE HINDUS																														
	SÂTÂRA GURAV	HANBAR	BIJÂPUR JAIN	KÂNARA JAIN	DHÂRWÂR JANGAM	SHOLÂPUR JANGAM	JINGAR	KABBER	KÂMÂTHI	KANBI	KATTIA	KÂYAT	KIRAD	BIJÂPUR KOMTI	SHOLÂPUR KOMTI	KSHATRI	KUMBHAR	BELGAUM KUNBI	KOLÂBA KUMBI	KONKAN KUNBI	POONA KUNBI	SÂTÂRA KUNBI	BELGAUM LINGÂYAT	BIJÂPUR LINGÂYAT	POONA LINGÂYAT	LODHI	MANBHAR	MARÂTHA	MÂRWÂRI	OSVÂL MÂRWÂRI	BELGAUM MUDLIAR
Length of description	B	C	C	B	A	C	A	C	C	A	C	C	C	B	A	C	C	A	A	C	B	A	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area					✓		✓			✓		✓			✓	✓		X				✓				✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓					✓				✓		✓	✓	✓					✓			✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Diff[illegible] tr[illegible] ac[illegible] m[illegible]																															

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued	CASTE HINDUS																														
	SĀTĀRA GURAV	HANBAR	BIJĀPUR JAIN	KĀNARA JAIN	DHĀRWĀR JANGAM	SHOLĀPUR JANGAM	JINGAR	KABBER	KĀMĀTHI	KANBI	KATIA	KĀYAT	KIRAD	BIJĀPUR KOMTI	SHOLĀPUR KOMTI	KSHATRI	KUMBHAR	BELGAUM KUNBI	KOLĀBA KUMBI	KONKAN KUNBI	POONA KUNBI	SĀTĀRA KUNBI	BELGAUM LIṄGĀYAT	BIJĀPUR LIṄGĀYAT	POONA LIṄGĀYAT	LODHI	MANBHAR	MARĀTHA	MĀRWĀRI	OSVĀL MĀRWĀRI	BELGAUM MUDLIAR
Length of description	B	C	C	B	A	C	A	C	C	A	C	C	C	B	A	C	C	A	A	C	B	A	C	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area					✓		✓			✓		✓			✓	✓		X				✓				✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓					✓				✓		✓	✓	✓					✓			✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status															✓			✓				✓								✓	
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																															
Use of *śeṣa*																			✓		✓										
Use of coconuts										✓																					
Music at the house or during the procession				X					✓	✓																					
Fire-pot carried in procession	✓			✓					✓		✓				✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
Halt on way to funeral ground	✓		✓				✓			✓				✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓				✓	✓
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt	✓		✓											✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession	✓						✓							✓	✓							✓								✓	✓
Cremation	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓				
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse	✓				✓		✓			✓								✓	✓			✓				✓					✓
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed	✓		✓				✓				✓			✓					✓			✓									✓
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial	✓		✓																		✓	✓						✓			
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓	✓	X			✓	✓	✓		✓			✓							✓	✓	✓				✓		✓			
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓			✓	✓							✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	X	✓
Shaving the chief mourner	✓						✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓			✓	✓				✓					
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Looking for footprints									✓									X			✓	✓									
Leaving lamp at place where person died						✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓						
Purification of house where person died			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓			✓	✓		✓			✓						X	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased	✓		✓				✓							✓				X	✓			✓						✓			
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals								✓											✓												
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days										✓				✓						✓											
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days							✓							✓	✓				✓										✓	X	
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days		✓					✓	✓							✓				✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		
Making a substitute crow															✓				✓												
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓				✓		✓			✓					✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓					✓		
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person																		X		✓							✓				
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal	✓												✓								✓	✓									
Caste dinners	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner										✓											✓	✓				✓					
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam							✓																								
Bull release																															
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death						✓	✓			✓										✓		✓									
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date			X					✓		✓	✓			✓			✓		✓			✓		X	✓			✓	✓	X	✓
Permanent memorial of dead person		✓																		✓					✓						
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓																							X							
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks															✓									+		✓					
Shaving the widow's head				X							S	✓												X							
Widow marriage		✓		X	✓	✓		✓		✓	S	X					✓		✓			✓	✓	S				S			
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																															
Length of primary pollution in days	10								12	10		10	10			10			10	8	12	10		X	10	10		10	10	X	16

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued	CASTE HINDUS																												
	BIJÂPUR MUDLIAR	SHOLÂPUR MUDLIAR	MUSHTIGAR	NADIG	TAILANG NHÂVI	OSHTAM	OTARI	PÂHÂDI	PÂNCHÂL	PÂTHARVAT	PATVEGÂR	DHRUV PRABHU	PÂTÂNE PRABHU	RADDI	RÂJAPUT	PARDESHI RAJPUT	RAUL	DHÂRWÂR SALI	POONA SALI	SHEROGAR	SHETIYÂR	SHIMPI	AHMADNEGAR JAIN SHIMPI	POONA JAIN SHIMPI	SONAR	SURYAVANSHI	LINGÂYAT TAMBOLI	HÂLVAKKI VAKKAL	GUJERAT VÂNI
Length of description	B	C	C	C	B	C	C	B	B	B	C	B	A	C	A	C	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area									✓			✓	✓		✓														✓
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓					✓	✓			✓			✓		✓		✓												
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓									✓	✓

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued

	CASTE HINDUS																												
	BIJĀPUR MUDLIAR	SHOLĀPUR MUDLIAR	MUSHTIGAR	NADIG	TAILANG NHĀVI	OSHTAM	OTARI	PĀHĀDI	PĀNCHĀL	PĀTHARAVAT	PATVEGĀR	DHRUV PRABHU	PĀTĀNE PRABHU	RADDI	RĀJPUT	PARDESHI RAJPUT	RAUL	DHĀRWĀR SĀLI	POONA SALI	SHEROGAR	SHETIYĀR	SHIMPI	AHMADNEGAR JAIN SHIMPI	POONA JAIN SHIMPI	SONAR	SURYAVANSHI	LIṄGĀYAT TAMBOLI	HĀLVAKKI VAKKAL	GUJERAT VĀNI
Length of description	B	C	C	C	B	C	C	B	B	B	C	B	A	C	A	C	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area									✓			✓	✓		✓														✓
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓					✓	✓			✓			✓		✓		✓												
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓									✓	✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status				✓		✓				✓			✓	✓										✓	✓		✓	✓	
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied	✓											✓																	
Use of *śeṣa*																													
Use of coconuts															✓														✓
Music at the house or during the procession					✓													✓											
Fire-pot carried in procession	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓				✓			✓				✓										✓
Halt on way to funeral ground					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt							✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓			✓					✓			✓		✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			+		✓	✓			✓					✓			✓		✓
Cremation	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water				✓	✓					✓							✓	✓								✓	✓	✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse								✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓										
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed			✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						✓										
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial		✓					✓		✓	✓			✓			✓							✓		✓		✓		
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓		✓				✓
Shaving the chief mourner		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					X				✓	
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓				✓		✓
Looking for footprints																									✓				
Leaving lamp at place where person died	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓						✓		✓					✓			
Purification of house where person died	✓	✓		✓									✓								✓							✓	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased			✓						✓	✓	X	✓	✓														✓	✓	
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals													✓													✓			
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓		✓										✓		✓													✓	
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days					✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days	✓		✓		✓	X		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Making a substitute crow													✓									✓			✓				
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								✓						✓
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person															✓					✓									
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal														✓										✓		✓			
Caste dinners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner		✓					✓	✓					✓		✓	✓			✓										
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																													
Bull release															✓														
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death			✓			✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓		✓				
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓				✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Permanent memorial of dead person														✓												✓			
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death										✓			✓																
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks													✓		✓													✓	
Shaving the widow's head													✓							X					S			X	
Widow marriage	X			✓						✓							✓	✓		X		✓			S			✓	
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																													
Length of primary pollution in days		15				10	10	10		8	13	10					X	11	10	10			10	10	10		5		10

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued	CASTE HINDUS							OUTCASTES/TRIBES																								
	LINGÂYAT VÂNI	MÂRWÂRI VÂNI	MESHRI VÂNIÂ	SHRÂVAK VÂNIÂ	VASÛDEV	VELÂLI	VÂKLAR	BARÂDI	BHANGIA	AKRÂNI BHIL	GUJERAT BHIL	KHÂNDESH BHIL	AHMADNAGAR BHOI	POONA BHOI	AHMADNAGAR CHÂMBÂR	NÂSIK CHÂMBÂR	POONA CHÂMBÂR	SÂTÂRA CHÂMBÂR	CHITRAKÂTHI	CHODRI	DANDIGDÂSAR	DASAR	DAVAR	DHANGAR	DHEDA	AHMADNAGAR DHOR	POONA DHOR	DHUNDIA	DUBLA	GÂMTA	GARLI	BIJÂPUR GHISÂDI
Length of description	B	C	A	B	C	A	C	B	B	C	B	A	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	B	C	C	C	B	B	B	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area			✓	✓		✓						✓								✓												
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse																				+ X	✓		✓									
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓		✓	X		✓			✓			✓	✓								✓	✓								✓		✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status						✓	✓						✓				✓					✓				✓	✓					
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																																

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued	CASTE HINDUS							OUTCASTES/TRIBES																									
	LINGĀYAT VĀNI	MĀRWĀRI VĀNI	MESHRI VĀNIĀ	SHRĀVAK VĀNIĀ	VASŪDEV	VELĀLI	VĀKLAR	BARĀDI	BHANGIA	AKRĀNI BHIL	GUJERAT BHIL	KHĀNDESH BHIL	AHMADNAGAR BHOI	POONA BHOI	AHMADNAGAR CHĀMBĀR	NĀSIK CHĀMBĀR	POONA CHĀMBĀR	SĀTĀRA CHĀMBĀR	CHITRAKĀTHI	CHODRI	DANDIGDĀSAR	DASAR	DAVAR	DHANGAR	DHEDA	AHMADNAGAR DHOR	POONA DHOR	DHUNDIA	DUBLA	GĀMTA	GARLI	BIJĀPUR GHISĀDI
Length of description	B	C	A	B	C	A	C	B	B	C	B	A	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	B	C	C	C	B	B	B	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area			✓	✓		✓						✓								✓												
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse																				+ X	✓		✓									
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓		✓	X		✓			✓			✓	✓								✓	✓								✓		✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status						✓	✓						✓				✓					✓				✓	✓					
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																																
Use of *śeṣa*											✓																					
Use of coconuts									✓																							
Music at the house or during the procession	✓					S		✓	✓											✓								✓		✓		
Fire-pot carried in procession		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓	✓							✓	✓					✓	✓					
Halt on way to funeral ground	✓		✓			✓			✓			✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓	X			✓	✓					
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt	✓		✓									✓	✓				✓		✓							✓	✓					
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession			✓			✓							✓				✓			✓						✓	✓					
Cremation		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
Burial or disposal in water	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse	✓		✓									✓			✓				✓	✓					✓	✓	✓				✓	
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed													✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓									
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/ burial								✓						✓							✓					✓	✓					
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/ or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓							✓	✓				✓	✓	✓				✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave			✓			✓								✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓						✓		✓
Shaving the chief mourner		X	✓	✓		✓					✓	✓	✓						X	✓												✓
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓				✓	
Looking for footprints												✓																				
Leaving lamp at place where person died						✓	✓	X														✓										
Purification of house where person died	✓																			✓		✓										
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased						✓					✓		✓	✓									✓					✓				
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals				✓			✓																									✓
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days			✓			✓				✓		✓								✓			✓									
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days									✓				✓	✓			✓	✓								✓	✓					✓
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days			✓				✓	X					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓					✓
Making a substitute crow													✓																			
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓		✓	✓					✓											✓												
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person			✓							✓																						
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal								✓				✓										✓										✓
Caste dinners		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner			✓			✓				✓			✓	✓			✓						✓			✓	✓					
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																																
Bull release			✓																													
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death				X			✓																									
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date				X			X						✓						✓	✓												
Permanent memorial of dead person																				✓		✓	✓					✓	✓			✓
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death		✓								✓	✓	✓								✓												
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks			✓	✓						✓																						
Shaving the widow's head			✓	X						✓																						
Widow marriage	✓				✓	X		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓			✓		✓				✓			
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																																
Length of primary pollution in days	X							X	X	X		10	10		10		10				10	8	12		11	10	10				8	10

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES																															
	POONA GHISÂDI	SHOLÂPUR GHISÂDI	HALÂLKHAR	SAHADEV JOSHI	SARVADE JOSHI	KABLIGER	KAIKÂDI	KÂMÂTHI	KÂTHKARI	KATHODIA	KILIKET	KOLGHA	KOLHÂTI	AHMADNAGAR KOLI	DHOR KOLI	GUJERAT KOLI	KONKAN KOLI	SHOLÂPUR KOLI	KONKA	LAMAN	MÂDIG	GUJERAT MANG	SHOLÂPUR MANG	KHÂNDESH MHÂR	POONA MHÂR	SHOLÂPUR MHÂR	THÂNA MHÂR	MOCHI	MUKRI	NAIK	NAIKODA	PÂVRÂ
Length of description	B	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	A	C	C	C	C	A	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area					X											✓								✓								
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓													✓		✓								✓	✓							✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓			✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES																														
	POONA GHISÂDI	SHOLÂPUR GHISÂDI	HÂLÂLKHAR	SAHADEV JOSHI	SARVADE JOSHI	KABLIGER	KAIKÂDI	KÂMÂTHI	KÂTHKARI	KATHODIA	KILIKET	KOLGHA	KOLHÂTI	AHMADNAGAR KOLI	DHOR KOLI	GUJERAT KOLI	KONKAN KOLI	SHOLÂPUR KOLI	KONKA	LAMAN	MÂDIG	GUJERAT MANG	SHOLÂPUR MANG	KHÂNDESH MHÂR	POONA MHÂR	SHOLÂPUR MHÂR	THÂNA MHÂR	MOCHI	MUKRI	NAIK	NAIKODA	PÂVRÂ
Length of description	B	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	A	C	C	C	C	A	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area					X											✓								✓								
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse	✓													✓		✓								✓	✓							✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓			✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status			✓											✓						✓												
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																								✓								
Use of *śeṣa*																																
Use of coconuts																												✓				
Music at the house or during the procession								✓	✓														✓									✓
Fire-pot carried in procession								✓						✓			✓						✓			✓						
Halt on way to funeral ground	✓		✓						✓				✓	✓	✓			✓		✓			✓			✓		✓				
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt													✓	✓						✓												
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession	✓		✓						✓						✓			✓		✓			✓			✓	✓					
Cremation	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		U	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		U	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			U
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓				✓	✓								✓	✓								✓
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed	✓			✓					✓					✓	✓			✓						✓	✓	✓						
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial	✓			✓										✓														✓				
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓														✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓					
Shaving the chief mourner	✓	✓	✓		X		✓							✓		✓		✓						✓				✓			✓	
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil bathe	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			
Looking for footprints								✓						✓																		
Leaving lamp at place where person died			✓					✓			✓			✓																		
Purification of house where person died								✓			✓			✓							✓		✓			✓			✓			
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased									✓				✓								✓						✓			✓		
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals											✓			✓															✓			
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days		✓							✓						✓	✓												✓			✓	✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓			✓								✓		✓								
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days						✓							✓	✓							✓			✓	✓		✓		✓			
Making a substitute crow																																
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓															✓	✓															
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person															✓																	✓
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal	✓				✓		✓	✓			✓							✓					✓			✓						
Caste dinners	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner	✓	✓																✓						✓	✓							
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																																
Bull release																																
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death																													✓			
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date					✓				S						✓					✓						✓			✓			
Permanent memorial of dead person						✓	✓	✓		X	✓								✓			✓								✓		
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death											✓			✓						✓												✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks	✓								✓																							✓
Shaving the widow's head																																
Widow marriage		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓					✓				✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother														X																		
Length of primary pollution in days	10	11	12		7		5		12				8	10			10	10				4	12	8 to 10			10		8		12	X

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued	OUTCASTES/TRIBES									
	RABARI	RAIKARI	RAMOSHI	THÂKUR	UCHLIA	VANJÂRI	GUJERAT VÂRLI	THÂNA VÂRLI	VITOLIA	WARLI[20]
Length of description	C	B	A	C	B	B	C	B	C	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area										
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse			✓							✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status					✓					✓
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied										

Maharashtra and Gujerat: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES									
	RABARI	RAIKARI	RAMOSHI	THÂKUR	UCHLIA	VANJÂRI	GUJERAT VÂRLI	THÂNA VÂRLI	VITOLIA	WARLI[20]
Length of description	C	B	A	C	B	B	C	B	C	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area										
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse			✓							✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status					✓					✓
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied										
Use of *śeṣa*			✓							
Use of coconuts										
Music at the house or during the procession					✓			✓		+ S
Fire-pot carried in procession					✓	✓				✓
Halt on way to funeral ground	X	✓	✓	✓		✓				
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt	X	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		+
Cremation	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water		U	✓	✓				U		
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial			✓			✓				✓
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Shaving the chief mourner			✓		✓	✓				
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Looking for footprints					✓					
Leaving lamp at place where person died			✓			✓				
Purification of house where person died					✓	✓				
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased		✓								
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals										
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days		✓		✓						✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days					✓	✓				
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days			✓		✓	✓		✓		
Making a substitute crow										
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers			✓	✓						
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person				✓						
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal			✓		✓					
Caste dinners	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner			✓			✓				
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam										
Bull release										
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death										✓
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date		✓		✓		✓		✓		
Permanent memorial of dead person			✓						✓	
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death		✓						✓		✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks										
Shaving the widow's head										
Widow marriage			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother			X							
Length of primary pollution in days		12	7	12		10	4	12		2

South India:

taken from *The Tribes and Castes of Southern India* by E Thurston

	BRAHMINS				CASTE HINDUS																								
	BRAHMIN	NAMBÛTIRI	VAIṢṆÀVITE [21]	VAIṢṆÀVITE [22]	BANT	NÂDAVA & MÂSÂDIKA BANT	BHONDÂRI	BOYA	CHÂLIYAN	GAMALLA	GÂNIGA	GAUDA	GAUDO	IDAIYAN	IZHAVA	KÂLINGI	KAMMA	KAMMÂLAN	KANNADIYAN	KÂPPILIYAN	KÂPU	KHATRI	KOLAYAN	KRISHNAVAKKAR	KOIL TAMPURÂN	WEST BELLARY KURUBA	NORTH ARCOT KURUBA	LIÑGÂYAT	MÂLI	MARAVAN
Length of description	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	A	C	B	B	A	A	C	A	C	A	B	B	C	C	C	C	B	B	A	C	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area	✓	✓	✓	✓																					✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse							✓								✓		✓													
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓											✓	✓						✓			✓		

South India:
taken from *The Tribes and Castes of Southern India* by E Thurston

	BRAHMINS				CASTE HINDUS																									
	BRAHMIN	NAMBŪTIRI	VAIṢṆÂVITE [21]	VAIṢṆÂVITE [22]	BANT	NÂDAVA & MÂSÂDIKA BANT	BHONDÂRI	BOYA	CHÂLIYAN	GAMALLA	GÂNIGA	GAUDA	GAUDO	IDAIYAN	IZHAVA	KÂLINGI	KAMMA	KAMMÂLAN	KANNADIYAN	KÂPPILIYAN	KÂPU	KHATRI	KOLAYAN	KRISHNAVAKKAR	KOIL TAMPURÂN	WEST BELLARY KURUBA	NORTH ARCOT KURUBA	LIṄGÂYAT	MÂLI	MARAVAN
Length of description	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	A	C	B	B	A	A	C	A	C	A	B	B	C	C	C	C	B	B	A	C	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area	✓	✓	✓	✓																					✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse							✓								✓		✓													
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓											✓	✓						✓			✓		
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status				✓															✓							✓				
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied			✓	✓																								✓		
Use of *śeṣa*		✓		✓					✓																					
Use of coconuts																	✓		✓											
Music at the house or during the procession					✓					✓									✓											
Fire-pot carried in procession					✓								✓	✓						✓										
Halt on way to funeral ground	✓		✓	✓										✓			✓					✓								
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																	+													
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession	+		✓											✓			✓													✓
Cremation	✓	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water		U			U			✓	✓		✓		U		U			U	+	U						✓	✓	✓		✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓						✓	✓		✓							✓						
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed	✓	+	✓	✓				+	✓					✓	✓		✓				✓					+	✓			✓
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial			✓	✓																										
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓						✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓					✓			
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓									✓
Shaving the chief mourner	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓				✓				D												✓
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓						✓
Looking for footprints							✓									✓														
Leaving lamp at place where person died				✓		✓		✓					✓																✓	✓
Purification of house where person died																													✓	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓			✓							
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals																														
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓	+	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	X	✓	✓		✓	✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days	✓	✓	✓		✓																									
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓									✓							✓			
Making a substitute crow																														
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓		✓	✓						✓							✓								✓			✓	✓	
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person		✓															✓													
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																			✓								✓			
Caste dinners	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓																			✓	✓		✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																				✓										✓
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam	✓	✓	✓	✓																										
Bull release			✓	✓																										
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death	✓	✓		✓											✓															
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓	✓		✓	✓							✓	✓				✓								✓			S		
Permanent memorial of dead person									✓		✓				✓			✓									✓			
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death		✓			✓						✓			✓	✓				✓	✓										✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks	S		✓	✓			✓			✓				✓			✓					✓					✓			
Shaving the widow's head							✓																							
Widow marriage					✓					✓		✓		S		✓	X		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			S	✓	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																✓														
Length of primary pollution in days		11											11		10 to 15		16	15				7 to 10	12	16	11		10		10	17

South India: continued

	CASTE HINDUS												OUTCASTES/TRIBES																		
	NÂTTUKOTTAI CHETTI	NÂYAR	OKKILIYAN	PADMA SÂLE	PALLI OR VANNIYAN	PATNÛLKÂRANS	SÎLAVANT	SONDI	TIYAN	TOREYA	YÂTA	PRAMALAI KALLAR[29]	BADAGA	BÂVURI	BILLAVA	CHENCHU	CHERUMAN	CHITRA GHÂSI	ERAVALLAR	HADDI	BÂKUDA HOLEYA	MÂRI HOLEYA	NÎLGIRI IRULA	S. ARCOT IRULA	JÂTAPU	JOGI	KÂNAKKAN	KANIKAR	KELASI	KHARVI	KOLIYAN
Length of description	B	A	A	C	B	C	B	C	A	B	C	A	A	A	A	C	A	C	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area		✓							✓			✓																			
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse		✓							✓				+		✓													✓			
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓		✓			✓		✓				✓		✓								
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status			✓																												
Corpse's thumbs and toes									✓			✓			✓																✓

South India: continued

	CASTE HINDUS												OUTCASTES/TRIBES																		
	NĀTTUKOTTAI CHETTI	NĀYAR	OKKILIYAN	PADMA SĀLE	PALLI OR VANNIYAN	PATNŪLKĀRANS	SĪLAVANT	SONDI	TIYAN	TOREYA	YĀTA	PRAMALAI KALLAR[23]	BADAGA	BĀVURI	BILLAVA	CHENCHU	CHERUMAN	CHITRA GHĀSI	ERAVALLAR	HADDI	BĀKUDA HOLEYA	MĀRI HOLEYA	NĪLGIRI IRULA	S. ARCOT IRULA	JĀTAPU	JOGI	KĀNAKKAN	KANIKAR	KELASI	KHARVI	KOLIYAN
Length of description	B	A	A	C	B	C	B	C	A	B	C	A	A	A	A	C	A	C	C	B	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	C	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area		✓							✓			✓																			
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse		✓							✓				+		✓													✓			
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓		✓			✓		✓				✓		✓								
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status			✓																												
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied									✓			✓			✓																✓
Use of *śeṣa*		✓							✓								✓														
Use of coconuts		✓							✓																				✓		
Music at the house or during the procession												+	✓				✓						✓								
Fire-pot carried in procession	✓																														
Halt on way to funeral ground				✓	✓																										
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt												✓																			
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession		✓	✓	✓	✓								✓	✓																	
Cremation	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓					U			S	✓	✓	✓
Burial or disposal in water		U	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		+		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse		✓					✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓								✓			✓					
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓																			
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial												✓																			
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓		✓		✓								✓		✓		✓	✓		✓											✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓	✓				✓			✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓										✓	✓	✓	✓
Shaving the chief mourner		D	✓						✓			✓	✓						✓		✓										
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓										✓	✓			
Looking for footprints																				✓											
Leaving lamp at place where person died		✓	✓					✓																							
Purification of house where person died								✓				✓	✓														✓				
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased		✓	✓							✓							✓			✓		✓				✓			✓		✓
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals					✓															✓										✓	
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days		✓						✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days		✓							✓				✓																		
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days		✓							✓							✓													+		
Making a substitute crow																															
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓							✓	✓																					✓	
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person																							✓								
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal			✓																												
Caste dinners		✓	✓	✓						✓		✓					✓						✓				✓	✓			
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner	✓											✓																			
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																															
Bull release																															
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death		✓					✓		✓																						
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date			✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓						✓				✓		✓			✓	✓		
Permanent memorial of dead person							✓		✓																		✓				
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death		✓	✓	✓	✓										✓										✓				✓		
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks			✓			✓				✓			✓																		
Shaving the widow's head						X																									
Widow marriage					✓	X			✓		✓			X	✓	✓		✓	✓									✓	✓		
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																															
Length of primary pollution in days	8	7						10	11 to 13			7					13	3	5						3		15				16

South India: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES																																
	KONDHS	KONDRA	KORAGA	KORAVA	YERUKALA KORAVA	MYSORE KORAVA	KOTA	KOYI	KÛDAN	KUDIYA	MÂDIGA	VAISṆÂVA MÂLA	ŚAIVA MÂLA	MALA ARAYAN	MALASAR	MANDÂDAN CHETTI	MANNÂN	MATTIYA	MUDUVAR	MÛKA DORA	MUKKUVAN	NALKE	NÂYÂDI	ODDE	PAIDI	PALLAN	PÂNÂN	PANIYAN	PARAIYAN	PATTANAVAN	POROJA	PULLUVAN	RÂNIYAVA
Length of description	A	C	C	C	C	C	A	A	B	B	B	A	A	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	A	C	A	B	C	A	C	A	A	B	B	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area				✓																													
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse												✓				✓																	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse							✓					✓	✓			✓					✓			✓		✓			✓				

South India: continued

OUTCASTES/TRIBES

	KONDHS	KONDRA	KORAGA	KORAVA	YERUKALA KORAVA	MYSORE KORAVA	KOTA	KOYI	KÛDAN	KUDIYA	MÂDIGA	VAIṢṆAVA MÂLA	ŚAIVA MÂLA	MALA ARAYAN	MALASAR	MANNÂDAN CHETTI	MANNÂN	MATTIYAR	MUDUVAR	MÛKA DORA	MUKKUVAN	NALKE	NÂYÂDI	ODDE	PAIDI	PALLAN	PÂNÂN	PANIYAN	PARAIYAN	PATTANAVAN	POROJA	PULLUVAN	RÂNIYAVA
Length of description	A	C	C	C	C	C	A	A	B	B	B	A	A	B	C	B	C	C	C	C	A	C	A	B	C	A	C	A	A	B	B	C	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area				✓																													
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse												✓				✓																	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse							✓					✓	✓			✓					✓			✓		✓			✓				
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status				✓	✓																												✓
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied												✓														✓							
Use of *śeṣa*																					✓												
Use of coconuts										✓																✓							
Music at the house or during the procession				✓			✓					✓				✓	✓																
Fire-pot carried in procession						✓						✓	✓																✓	✓			
Halt on way to funeral ground												+	✓											✓					✓				
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																																	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession				✓			✓																	✓		✓			✓				
Cremation	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓					✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
Burial or disposal in water			✓		✓	✓		U	✓	U	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	U	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	U
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse	✓		✓			✓		✓									✓				✓							✓	✓	✓		✓	
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed				✓	✓								✓								✓					✓			✓	✓			
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial									✓											✓													
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓									✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave				✓			✓	✓	✓									✓		✓			✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		
Shaving the chief mourner		✓							D				✓								D					✓		✓		✓			
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓								✓			✓	✓							✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓		
Looking for footprints																																	
Leaving lamp at place where person died												✓	✓											✓		✓							
Purification of house where person died									✓			✓	✓		✓								✓										
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased	✓			✓	✓						✓		✓								✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals						✓																											
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓					X	✓	✓		+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days								✓																								✓	
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days				✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓							✓				✓		✓							
Making a substitute crow																																	
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers								✓																									
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person	✓						✓																										
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal																																	
Caste dinners	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓											✓					✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																										✓							
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																																	
Bull release																																	
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death							✓		✓								✓				✓												
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date				✓									✓	✓									✓		✓		✓						
Permanent memorial of dead person			✓					✓						✓				✓	✓			✓	✓				✓				✓		
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death				✓	✓			✓		✓				✓			✓		✓								✓		✓				✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks	✓						✓				✓	✓	✓								✓			✓		✓				✓			
Shaving the widow's head																																	
Widow marriage			✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓		✓		✓	✓						✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																		✓											X		✓		
Length of primary pollution in days			16	15		6		X	14									8	X	3	7		10			4	16				9	15	

South India: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES														
	SAVARA	SEMBADAVAN	SHOLAGA	THANDA PULAYAN	TODA	ULLÂDAN	UPPARAS	TRICHINOPOLY URÂLI	COMBIATORE URÂLI	VALAIYAN	VÂLAN	VALLAMBAN	VALLUVAN	VETTUVAN	YÂNÂDI
Length of description	A	C	B	B	A	B	C	B	A	B	B	C	A	A	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area															
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse														✓	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓						✓						✓	✓	✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status															
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied															

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South India: continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES														
	SAVARA	SEMBADAVAN	SHOLAGA	THANDA PULAYAN	TODA	ULLADANS	UPPARAS	TRICHINOPOLY URÂLI	COMBIATORE URÂLI	VALAIYAN	VALAN	VALLAMBAN	VALLUVAN	VETTUVAN	YÂNÂDI
Length of description	A	C	B	B	A	B	C	B	A	B	B	C	A	A	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area															
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse														✓	
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓						✓						✓	✓	✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status															
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied															
Use of *śesa*															
Use of coconuts													✓		
Music at the house or during the procession			✓		✓			✓	✓						
Fire-pot carried in procession		✓													
Halt on way to funeral ground															✓
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt															
Offering of food, *pindas*, and/or money during procession									✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Cremation	✓	✓			✓			✓			✓	✓			
Burial or disposal in water		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Offering of food, *pindas*, and/or money to the corpse	+	✓		✓	✓				✓						
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed				✓						✓					
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial													✓		
Offering food, *pindas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial												✓	✓	✓	✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓									✓		✓		✓	
Shaving the chief mourner									✓	✓	✓			D	
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths				✓		✓		✓			✓			✓	✓
Looking for footprints															
Leaving lamp at place where person died			✓							✓					✓
Purification of house where person died						✓									
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased			✓											✓	✓
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals															
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓		✓
Offering and worship of *pindas* during the first twelve days				✓							✓			✓	✓
Offering of food and/or *pindas* to crows during the first twelve days															
Making a substitute crow															
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers											✓				
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person										✓					✓
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal															
Caste dinners	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner										✓		✓	✓		
Sapindīkaranam															
Bull release															
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death						✓								✓	
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓							✓						✓	
Permanent memorial of dead person			✓	✓					✓				✓		
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death				✓	✓										
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks												✓			
Shaving the widow's head															
Widow marriage	✓						✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		X	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother	✓										X				
Length of primary pollution in days						15	7 to 16					16	17	15	15

Central South India:
taken from *The Tribes and Castes of Mysore* by L Iyer

	BRAHMINS		CASTE HINDUS																												
	SMÂRTA	ŚRĪVAIṢṆAVA	AGASA	LINGÂYAT AGASA	ÂRÂDHYA	ARASU	CANARESE BANAJIGA	BANJARA	BESTA	BHATRÂZU	BILĪ MAGGAL	BILLAVA	DARZI	DÂSARI	DEVÂNGA	GANGADIKÂRA OKKALU	GOLLA	GUDIKÂRA	HALLIKAR	HELAVA	ĪDIGA	JAIN	JANGALA	JETTI	KARE OKKALU	KOMATI	KUMBARA	KUNCHITIGA	KURUBA	LINGÂYAT	MAHRÂTTA
Length of description	A	A	A	C	A	B	B	A	A	B	C	C	A	A	A	C	A	C	B	B	A	A	C	C	C	A	B	B	A	A	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area	✓	✓					✓															✓								✓	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse								✓	✓					✓			✓					✓				+					
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓						✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status	✓	✓					✓		✓					✓															✓	✓	
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																															

Central South India: taken from *The Tribes and Castes of Mysore* by L Iyer

	BRAHMINS		CASTE HINDUS																												
	SMĀRTA	ŚRĪVAIṢṆAVA	AGASA	LIṄGĀYAT AGASA	ĀRĀDHYA	ARASU	CANARESE BANAJIGA	BANJARA	BESTA	BHATRĀZU	BILĪ MAGGAL	BILLAVA	DARZI	DĀSARI	DEVĀNGA	GANGADIKĀRA OKKALU	GOLLA	GUDIKĀRA	HALLIKAR	HELAVA	ĪDIGA	JAIN	JANGALA	JETI	KARE OKKALU	KOMATI	KUMBARA	KUNCHITIGA	KURUBA	LIṄGĀYAT	MAHRĀTTA
Length of description	A	A	A	C	A	B	B	A	A	B	C	C	A	A	A	C	A	C	B	B	A	A	C	C	C	A	B	B	A	A	B
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area	✓	✓					✓															✓								✓	
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse								✓	✓					✓			✓					✓				+					
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse	✓	✓						✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status	✓	✓					✓		✓					✓															✓	✓	
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																															
Use of *śeṣa*																															
Use of coconuts																															
Music at the house or during the procession							✓										✓											✓		✓	
Fire-pot carried in procession	✓	✓						✓		✓																			✓		
Halt on way to funeral ground	✓	✓		✓				✓									✓									✓			✓		
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt								✓									✓									✓			✓		
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession																	✓									✓		✓	✓		
Cremation	✓	✓	✓	+U		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				U	✓			U		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
Burial or disposal in water			✓	✓	✓	✓		U	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse			X						✓								X				✓			+		✓					
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed	✓	✓		✓					✓								✓		✓			✓				✓		✓	✓		✓
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial																															
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial			✓					✓	✓					✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓								✓				✓	✓			✓					✓
Shaving the chief mourner	✓	✓			✓	✓							✓				✓														
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Looking for footprints								✓																							
Leaving lamp at place where person died			✓							✓			✓	✓	✓		✓				✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		
Purification of house where person died	✓	✓	✓			✓									✓		✓		✓		✓							✓	✓		
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased	✓	✓													✓		✓		✓			✓				✓		✓			
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals																															
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓	✓	✓										✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days	✓	✓																								✓					
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days													✓		✓	S					✓					+		✓	✓		
Making a substitute crow													✓																		
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers	✓	✓			✓	✓					✓				✓							✓				✓		✓	✓		
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person	✓	✓			✓										+																
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal			✓												✓						✓							✓			
Caste dinners			✓		✓			✓				✓		✓	✓				✓			✓	✓					✓	✓		
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																													✓		
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam	✓	✓																								✓					
Bull release	✓	✓																		✓						✓					
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death	✓	✓	X		✓								✓										✓			✓					✓
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Permanent memorial of dead person																															
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death			✓					✓						✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					+	✓			✓	
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks								✓	✓											✓		✓								✓	
Shaving the widow's head	✓	X																													
Widow marriage			✓		X			✓					✓		X	✓	X		✓	✓	✓										
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother								✓												X	X						✓	X	✓	s	
Length of primary pollution in days			11		X	10			10	10	12	11	10	11			10	10	11		10	12	11	10			16	10			X

Central South India: continued

	CASTE HINDUS																				OUTCASTES/TRIBES									
	MEDĀR	MODALIYAR	MORASU OKKALU	NĀMADHĀRI NAGARTHA	LINGADHĀRI NAGARTHA	NĀYINDA	PĀNCHĀLA	PATVEGAR	RĀCHEVĀR	REDDI	SĀDARU	SALAHUVA VAKKALU	SALE	SANYĀSI	SHOLIGA	THANMADI	TIGALA	TOGATA	UPPARA	VODDA	BAKKARU	BEDA	COORG [24]	DOMBAR	KADU GOLLA	GOND [25]	HALE PAIKA	HASĀLAR	HOLEYA	IRULIGA
Length of description	B	C	A	B	B	A	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	A	B	C	B	C	A	C	C	A	A	A	B	A	B	A	A	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area														✓											✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse			✓											✓							✓	✓			✓	✓				
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse			✓											✓		✓	✓				✓	✓			✓				✓	
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status			✓							✓				✓									✓							
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied										✓																✓				

Central South India: continued	CASTE HINDUS																				OUTCASTES/TRIBES									
	MEDĀR	MODALIYAR	MORASU OKKALU	NĀMADHĀRI NAGARTHA	LIṄGADHĀRI NAGARTHA	NĀYINDA	PĀNCHĀLA	PATVEGAR	RĀCHEVĀR	REDDI	SĀDARU	SALAHUVA VAKKALU	SALE	SANYĀSI	SHOLIGA	THANMADI	TIGALA	TOGATA	UPPARA	VODDA	BAKKARU	BEDA	COORG[24]	DOMBAR	KADU GOLLA	GOND[25]	HALE PAIKA	HASĀLAR	HOLEYA	IRULIGA
Length of description	B	C	A	B	B	A	C	C	C	A	C	C	C	A	B	C	B	C	A	C	C	A	A	A	B	A	B	A	A	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area														✓											✓					
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse			✓											✓							✓	✓			✓	✓				
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse			✓											✓		✓	✓				✓	✓			✓				✓	
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status			✓							✓				✓									✓							
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied										✓																✓				
Use of *śesa*																														
Use of coconuts										✓																				
Music at the house or during the procession			✓											✓			✓		✓				✓			✓				✓
Fire-pot carried in procession			✓											✓							✓	✓		✓				✓		
Halt on way to funeral ground			✓					✓	S	✓				✓	✓				✓			✓	✓			+		✓	✓	✓
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt								✓							✓				✓										✓	✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession			✓							✓												✓	✓							
Cremation	U	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	+	✓		✓			✓			U	U	U	✓	U	✓		U	✓	✓	✓		✓
Burial or disposal in water	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	U	✓	✓	✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse	✓							✓	✓					✓			✓		✓			✓	✓			✓	S		✓	✓
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed	✓									✓		✓										✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial																							✓						✓	
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓		✓			✓		✓	
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave				✓				✓	✓	✓									✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			
Shaving the chief mourner			✓			✓				✓							✓					✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths	✓			✓	✓							✓		✓			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Looking for footprints																								✓		✓			✓	
Leaving lamp at place where person died	✓		✓	✓	✓									✓					✓			✓		✓					✓	✓
Purification of house where person died	✓				✓					✓				✓				✓				✓		✓		✓		✓		
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased			✓							✓		✓		+	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓				+	✓		
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals	✓									✓													✓		✓					
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days										✓																				✓
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days	✓		✓							✓				+				+				✓	+	✓	✓		✓			
Making a substitute crow																														
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers			+		✓	✓			✓							✓						✓								
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person																														
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal			✓			✓				✓															+					
Caste dinners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓			✓				✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		+	✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner			✓		✓														✓											
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam																														
Bull release	+																													
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death				✓	X			✓		✓						✓	✓		X											
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		X	✓
Permanent memorial of dead person														✓	✓										✓	✓		✓		
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓						✓							X	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	+		✓			✓
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks										✓				✓	X									✓			✓		✓	X
Shaving the widow's head																														
Widow marriage	✓		✓	X		✓	X	✓		S	S		X	✓		X	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	S			✓	✓	✓	✓
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother																														
Length of primary pollution in days	12	16	10	10		10	12 to 16	13		13 to 10	10		12	12	11	10	12		10	12	11		12	28			10 to 12	9 to 14	11	11

Central South India continued	OUTCASTES/TRIBES								
	JÂMBAVA	HANDI JOGI	KACHAGAULIGA	KILLEKYATA	KORACHA	MÂDIGA	MÔCHI	MONDÂRU	SUDUGADU SIDDHA
Length of description	C	A	C	A	B	A	C	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area									
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse									
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse		✓		✓	✓				
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status				✓			✓		
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied									

Central South India
continued

	OUTCASTES/TRIBES								
	JÂMBAVA	HANDI JOGI	KACHAGAULIGA	KILLEKYATA	KORACHA	MÂDIGA	MÔCHI	MONDÂRU	SUDUGADU SIDDHA
Length of description	C	A	C	A	B	A	C	B	C
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area									
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse									
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse		✓		✓	✓				
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status				✓			✓		
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied									
Use of *śeṣa*									
Use of coconuts									
Music at the house or during the procession			✓						
Fire-pot carried in procession				✓					
Halt on way to funeral ground				✓	✓				
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt				✓	✓				
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession		✓			✓				
Cremation			✓	U		U			
Burial or disposal in water	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse		✓		✓					
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed					✓				
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial									
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	+	✓
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave			✓						
Shaving the chief mourner							✓		
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Looking for footprints						✓			
Leaving lamp at place where person died		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Purification of house where person died		✓		✓		✓		✓	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased		✓		✓		✓		✓	
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals									
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days									
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days				+	+	✓			
Making a substitute crow									
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers									
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person									
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal					✓	✓			
Caste dinners	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner									
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam									
Bull release									
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death									
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Permanent memorial of dead person	✓		S	✓					✓
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death				✓		✓	✓		
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks		✓							
Shaving the widow's head									
Widow marriage		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother								✓	
Length of primary pollution in days							10		10

South West Coast of India: taken from *The Cochin Tribes & Castes* by L Iyer

	BRAHMINS			CASTE HINDUS					OUTCASTES/TRIBES													
	KONKANA	NAMBŪTIRI	TAMIL	KADUPATTAN	KṢATRIYA	NAYAR	PANDARAM	PISHÂROTI	ERVALLAN	IZHUVAN	KADAR	KANIYAN	KONGA MALAYAN	MUKKUVAN	NAYADI	PANAN	PARAYAN	PULAYAN	ULLADAN	VALLAN	VELAN	VETTUVAN
Length of description	A	A	A	A	B	A	B	C	C	A	B	A	C	A	B	B	C	A	C	B	C	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area		✓	✓			✓				✓												
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse						✓				✓												✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓				✓				✓

South West Coast of India: taken from *The Cochin Tribes & Castes* by L Iyer

	BRAHMINS			CASTE HINDUS					OUTCASTES/TRIBES													
	KONKANA	NAMBŪTIRI	TAMIL	KADUPATTAN	KṢATRIYA	NAYAR	PANDARAM	PISHĀROTI	ERAVALAN	IZHUVAN	KADAR	KANIYAN	KONGA MALAYAN	MUKKUVAN	NAYADI	PANAN	PARAYAN	PULAYAN	ULLADAN	VALAN	VELAN	VETTUVAN
Length of description	A	A	A	A	B	A	B	C	C	A	B	A	C	A	B	B	C	A	C	B	C	A
Dying person or corpse laid on specially prepared area		✓	✓			✓				✓												
Putting Ganges water or other substances into the mouth of dying person or corpse						✓				✓												✓
Washing and decorating the dying person or corpse		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓				✓				✓
Differential dress or treatment of corpse according to gender or marital status																						
Corpse's thumbs and toes tied																						
Use of *śeṣa*																						
Use of coconuts										✓												
Music at the house or during the procession			✓								✓							✓				
Fire-pot carried in procession																						
Halt on way to funeral ground																						
Reversal of bearers or bier at halt																						
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money during procession											✓							✓				
Cremation	+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					✓	✓				✓	✓	
Burial or disposal in water							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Offering of food, *piṇḍas*, and/or money to the corpse			✓								✓			✓			✓	✓				
Circumambulation with pierced water pot which is then smashed		✓	✓			+				✓		✓		✓								
Cooling and/or purifying the area of cremation/burial																						
Offering food, *piṇḍas*, and/or drink at the area of cremation/burial																						
Gathering ashes and bones for disposal in water, or levelling of the grave		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓												✓
Shaving the chief mourner		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓			✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Bathing; chewing *nimba* leaves; taking *pañcagavya* or oil baths		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Looking for footprints																						
Leaving lamp at place where person died						✓	✓							✓								
Purification of house where person died		✓	✓			✓						✓						✓	✓		✓	
Use of stone or other object to represent deceased		✓	✓			+		✓				✓		✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
Offering food to and worship of dogs, cows, insects or other animals																						
Offering of food and drink to the deceased during the first twelve days		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓					✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
Offering and worship of *piṇḍas* during the first twelve days		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓				✓		✓		✓		✓
Offering of food and/or *piṇḍas* to crows during the first twelve days		✓				+									✓							
Making a substitute crow																						
Offering food and/or personal possessions to brahmins, priests or barbers		✓	✓		✓	✓														✓		
Offering presents to caste people or a caste representative of the dead person				✓		✓										✓						
Rubbing shoulders of corpse bearers with oil and/or giving them a meal							✓															
Caste dinners			✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
End of mourning marked by gift of turban or new clothing to chief mourner																						
Sapiṇḍīkaraṇam	✓		✓																			
Bull release	✓		✓																			
Śrāddhas, caste dinners or giving alms during the first year after death		✓	✓	✓		✓						✓			✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Śrāddha or commemorative rite on the anniversary of death, or for the dead on another yearly date		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓							✓
Permanent memorial of dead person											✓				✓							✓
Different funeral rites for those who have died an untimely death	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				+												
Removal of widow's ornaments and auspicious marks		✓	✓	✓										✓								
Shaving the widow's head			✓													✓					✓	✓
Widow marriage				✓					X		X	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	
Widow expected to marry husband's younger brother												X			X		X	X				
Length of primary pollution in days		10		10			15	12	5	10 to 15	10	15	9	15	10	15	16	16	15	16	16	15